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# THE PEOPLE OF THE POLAR NORTH

## A RECORD

BY

KNUD RASMUSSEN

COMPILED FROM THE DANISH ORIGINALS AND EDITED BY

G. HERRING

ILLUSTRATIONS BY

COUNT HARALD MOLTKE

PHILADELPHIA

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## EDITOR'S PREFACE

"THE PEOPLE OF THE POLAR NORTH" has been compiled from the Danish originals recently published by the author in Copenhagen, under the titles of "New People" and "Under the Lash of the North Wind." It deals with the three distinct Eskimo branches which make up the population of Greenland, that is to say, with the West Greenlanders, the civilised and Christianised inhabitants of South-West and West Greenland; the East Greenlanders, formerly the inhabitants of the South-East coast, which is now quite deserted, except for the area of Angmagssalik, as is also the whole of the East coast; and with the Polar Eskimos.

But, as its title implies, it is first and foremost an account of the most northerly dwelling people in the world, that is to say, of the little Eskimo group of nomads who wander from settlement to settlement between Cape York, North of Melville Bay, and Cape Alexander (approximately therefore between  $76^{\circ}$  and  $78^{\circ}$  N. latitude), and who are called in this book the Polar Eskimos. It is more than probable that the traditions and legends of the Eskimos scattered along the North of Canada would have much in common with those of the people whose characteristics and stories are here so faithfully presented, and for that reason the book may prove, and we hope will prove, of wide interest and importance. If Mr. Rasmussen is able to carry out his present intention of making a six years' tour along the whole of the North coast of North America as far as Alaska, with merely the slender Eskimo equipment of kayak and dog-sledge, for the purpose of studying at first hand the still-surviving remnants

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of a once numerous race, there may afterwards be an opportunity from his data of making comparisons and reaching definite ethnological conclusions. At present the Eskimos, as a race, are an unexplored and unexploited people, and much of their origin and history is still conjecture, though the proof of the great similarity between the dialects of different tribes would give confirmation to the theory of a common parentage at no remote date. As will be seen in "The People of the Polar North," at least three distinct groups, viz. an American Eskimo group, apparently arriving from South Ellesmere Land or perhaps even from Baffin Land, the Cape York Eskimos, and the so-called West Greenlanders, had little or no difficulty in making themselves mutually understood. And it should not be forgotten that *within the memory of man there had been no association between these same groups*. The East Greenlanders, whose dialect presents many points of similarity with the rest, might have been mentioned in the list, but I have excluded them, as it is not strictly correct to assert that there has been no association until recent times between them and the West Greenlanders.

In June 1902 the "Danish Literary Expedition"<sup>1</sup> left Copenhagen for South-West Greenland, *en route* for Cape York, the three principal members of it being Mr. L. Mylius-Erichsen (whose interesting diary has not so far been published in English), Mr. Knud Rasmussen, and Lieutenant Count Harald Moltke, the artist.

Each was responsible for a special section of the work, and all of them had had previous experience in Arctic travelling. Mr. Rasmussen was peculiarly fitted to win the confidence and affection of the Eskimos, and to acquire an intimate knowledge

<sup>1</sup> This Expedition was originally a private venture, the only public support it received being a donation from the Carlsberg Fund, Copenhagen; but on its return, the importance of its results both from the geographical and ethnological points of view were regarded as so considerable that the expenses incurred were taken over and defrayed by the State.

of their religious beliefs, their legends, and their personal recollections, because he himself had been born and brought up in Greenland, had spoken the Eskimo language from his babyhood, and could claim racial kinship with the people among whom he was pursuing his investigations. To avoid any misunderstanding that this remark might give rise to, I hasten to explain that this kinship is tolerably remote, and that Mr. Rasmussen is not, as some people have fancied, a civilised savage Eskimo. I believe he really has some Eskimo blood in his veins, and, especially in association with the Polar Eskimos, whom he has studied with such affectionate interest, makes the most of it and half-jestingly claims to be an Eskimo himself, but the actual facts are rather more prosaic. He is the elder son of Pastor Christian Rasmussen, a Danish clergyman who for upwards of twenty years was a missionary in South-West Greenland, and at the age of fourteen he was brought home to Denmark, where he finished his education and graduated at the Copenhagen University. So he is in the fortunate position of being able to make his investigations and observations as it were from the inside and outside at the same time.

But he is more than a sympathetic and able student of an interesting group of pagans. The People of the Polar North are "New People," as far as their inner life, beliefs, and traditions are concerned, and in this field Mr. Rasmussen must remain the last as he was the first competent seeker. Never before has there been an Arctic explorer attracted to the far North, not by the magnetic Pole, but by the Polar people, who has at the same time been so admirably equipped for sympathetic research as is Mr. Rasmussen. Even Rink, the well-known author of valuable books on the Eskimos and on Greenland, and whom I have no wish whatever to depreciate, since he brought great sympathy to bear on his inquiries, as



well as much painstaking labour, had not the advantage of knowing the Greenlandic language and consequently could only obtain his information through the medium of three or four interpreters. Such a drawback must almost unavoidably lead, and in his case did lead, to misunderstandings and mistakes.

And, just as Mr. Rasmussen was the first man to make thorough and efficient research into the folk-lore treasures of the Polar Eskimos, their traditional history and their religion, he will probably of necessity be the last. When others come, if they do come, they will be too late. The Polar Eskimos are very few in number. They are not a fertile race, and year by year, ravaged often by mysterious and perhaps imported sicknesses, and waging a perpetual war with Nature in her harshest mood, they are growing steadily fewer. Soon there may be none of them left; but even though the race survive, their traditions hardly can survive much longer unimpaired. Contact with the white Polar explorers, the communication which the Danish Literary Expedition succeeded in opening up between the Cape Yorkers and the West Greenlanders, may be useful to these children of nature, inasmuch as they have already learnt to appreciate some of the advantages of modern civilisation—such as Winchester breech-loaders, ammunition, and matches—which it would be impossible to deprive them of again. But undoubtedly such contact will tend to efface the memory of their legends and their folk-lore, to destroy the continuity of their primitive religious beliefs, and to modify their mode of thought. Such a result is inevitable; but it is the death-note of their unspoiled individuality. The North American Eskimos of course remain, if there be any who wish to follow in Mr. Rasmussen's footsteps, and do better work than his. But they will find it a difficult task, and I am not in a position

to state that that field of research would prove equally fruitful.

Unfortunately, the present volume has not had the advantage of the author's own revision. He sailed for Greenland in August 1906, to make inquiries and preliminary preparations, previous to starting on the North Canadian tour of exploration alluded to above, and he will not again be within reach of any post until after this book is in print.

Before he left Europe, however, he expressed, in a letter to me, his hope that an English edition of his book, or books, might appear, and he entrusted all arrangements to the joint decision of his friend Count Harald Moltke and myself.

For the editorship, however faulty, I must herewith claim full responsibility, but I should like to take this opportunity of thanking Count Harald Moltke for the loyal and consistent support he has given me throughout, as well as for the unfailing patience and kindness that he has shown me, and without which my editorship of the English edition would have been impossible. There is not a page of it that has not passed under his critical supervision, the likelihood of error or misunderstanding in the translation being thus reduced to a minimum, and I have not once consulted him on any point when his help and advice have not been immediately forthcoming. Of his own share in the book, the illustrations, I need not speak. They will speak for themselves more eloquently than I can do. I should, however, like to say that many of them were executed in pain, and under circumstances of unusual difficulty; for Count Harald Moltke became seriously ill before arriving at Cape York, and for many weeks it seemed unlikely that he would ever return to Europe alive. It was a long time before he could even hold pencil or brush firmly again, and up to the present time he has not fully recovered the health which he sacrificed in his enthusiastic and con-

scientious labours. Drawing and painting are not outdoor pursuits pre-eminently adapted to a temperature of 30° below zero, and obviously the drawings of the present volume do not represent the entire output of his draughtsman's labours. This I mention as a tribute to Count Harald Moltke's personal courage, not as an apology for his pictures, which need none.

I must further express my grateful thanks to Pastor Christian Rasmussen (author of *Grønlandsk Sproglære*) for kindly revising and correcting the spelling of the various Greenlandic names and words employed, also to Professor Hector Jørgensen, of the Zoological Museum in Copenhagen, and to Mr. Edgar A. Smith, D.S.O., of the British Museum, who have been good enough to check and rectify the zoological names that occur.

In conclusion I should like to explain briefly that the plan of the present volume does not pretend to follow the sequence of the Expedition's route, it having seemed wiser to place the section of the work dealing with the Polar Eskimos first, although the matter was collected in a different order.

The Danish Literary Expedition arrived in Greenland in June 1902, and left Upernivik for Cape York in March 1903, spending nearly ten months among the Polar Eskimos, and leaving for the south again in January 1904. The Expedition again broke its journey in West Greenland, and only arrived back in Copenhagen in September 1904, the East Greenlandic stories and fables being collected and written down during this second stay in West Greenland.

As I have said, I must claim full responsibility for the arrangement of the present volume. Unfortunately, it was impossible to include all the matter at my disposal within the necessary limits, but I have endeavoured not to omit anything really typical, or of interest to English readers. My aim has been to include descriptions of life among the

three types that make up the population of Greenland, and to offer as representative a selection as possible from the annals of their abundant folk-lore. Save for what in the pursuance of this plan has been left out, and in one or two cases transposed, the author's text remains practically untouched.

I regret that there exist no portraits of the last of the East Greenlanders, but Count Harald Moltke was not with Mr. Rasmussen during his stay among them.

Whether this little book will meet with the appreciation the devoted efforts of its author and artist deserve I cannot tell, but it is with the hope that it may please what is perhaps the most critical audience in the world, that it has been launched on the troubled waters of English publicity.

G. HERRING.

LONDON, *April* 1908.



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## AUTHOR'S PREFACE

WHEN I was a child I used often to hear an old Greenlandic woman tell how, far away North, at the end of the world, there lived a people who dressed in bearskins and ate raw flesh.

Their country was always shut in by ice, and the daylight never reached over the tops of their high fjelds.

Whoever wished to go there, must travel with the South wind, right up to the Lord of the wild northern gales.

Even before I knew what travelling meant, I determined that one day I would go and find these people, whom my fancy pictured different from all others. I must go and see "The New People," as the old story-teller called them.

While I was growing up in Denmark, the thought of them was always with me, and the first decision I came to as a man was that I would go to look for them. My opportunity arrived, and as a member of the "Danish Literary Expedition to Greenland," I passed the winter of 1903-1904 among these Polar Eskimos, the most northerly dwelling people in the world.

And it is from this sojourn, remote from all civilisation, that the following recollections date.

KNUD RASMUSSEN.



# THE NEW PEOPLE

## PART I

*And he never knew rest again, after he had once heard  
the rumour of the new people.*

OLD MERQUSÂQ.



# THE NEW PEOPLE

## FIRST MEETING WITH THE POLAR ESKIMOS

WE had reached our goal!

But one of our number was dangerously ill, and we were powerless to relieve him; the people we had hoped to meet with at the Cape York settlement had left their houses, and our famished dogs were circling madly round us; we had hardly enough food left for one good meal, even for ourselves. To lighten our sledges we had stored our chests of supplies at Cape Murdoch, and a considerable proportion of the provisions that we had calculated would suffice for the journey thence to Cape York had been devoured by the dogs.

The forced pace of the last two days and nights had greatly exhausted us; for the moment, however, we were so much struck by all the new sights around us, by the strange, primitive human dwellings, that we forgot our fatigue in exploring the settlement. But it was not long before we flung ourselves down by our sledges and dropped asleep.

It is but a short rest, though, that a traveller can permit himself under critical circumstances. One of us soon woke again and roused the others. A more careful examination of the snow huts then revealed that it could not have been long since their owners had left them. In one of them there was a large seal, not cut up, which provided our dogs with a very welcome feast.

There were numerous sledge-tracks running northward, with only a light powdering of snow upon them; consequently men could not be far away.



I remembered a story told us by an old Greenlander whom we had visited in Danish West Greenland, on our way north.

He knew that they had kinsmen a long way north; but no one was certain exactly whereabouts. It was so far away. The following tradition he had heard as a child:—

“Once upon a time there was a man who lived farther north than any of the settlements. He hunted bears every spring on a dog-sledge.

“Once, during the chase, he came upon strange sledge-tracks, and made up his mind to seek out the people who had made them. So he set out on his bear-hunts the next year earlier than he was wont to do. The third day he came to houses different in appearance from those to which he was accustomed. But he met with no people; fresh tracks, though, showed that the settlement had been only recently left.

“When the bear-hunter drove off the following year he took wood with him, as a gift to the strangers; for he thought they must suffer greatly from the want of wood, as they used narwhal’s tusks for the roof-beams of their houses.

“But he did not meet with the strangers on his second visit either. True, the tracks were newer than they had been the last time, but he did not dare to follow them up, and thus put a still greater distance between himself and his own village. He contented himself with burying the wood he had brought with him in the snow near the houses, and then, having presented his gifts, he went home.

“The third year he raised the best team of dogs that he had ever had, and earlier than was his custom he drove north after bears and the strange people. When at last he reached the village it was just as it had been the other years: the inhabitants had gone; but in the snow, where he had left his wood, they had hidden a large bundle of walrus tusks, and inside, in the entrance passage, lay a magnificent bitch and puppies. These were the return gifts of the strangers.

“He put them on his sledge and drove back home; but the people who lived north of all other men he never found.”

And now, just as had been the case then, many sledge-

tracks ran north, and again, as in the legend, it could not have been many days since they had been made.

It was an odd experience, creeping through the long, low tunnel entrances into the houses; with our furs on we could hardly pass. At the end, we came to a hole up through which we had to squeeze ourselves, and then we were in the house. There was a strong smell of raw meat and fox inside.

The first time one sees a house of this description one is struck by the little with which human beings can be content. It is all so primitive, and has such an odour of paganism and magic incantation. A cave like this, skilfully built in arch of gigantic blocks of stone, one involuntarily peoples mentally with half supernatural beings. You see them, in your fancy, pulling and tearing at raw flesh, you see the blood dripping from their fingers, and you are seized yourself with a strange excitement at the thought of the extraordinary life that awaits you in their company.

We walked round, examining all these things, which, in their silent way, spoke to us of the men and women who lived their lonely life up here. A little way from the houses, in a circle, were some large round stones, shining with stale grease. "Here they must have had their meals," suggested one of our Greenlanders. Already our imagination was at work.

Farther up, just under the overhanging cliff, lay a kayak with all its appurtenances, covered over with stones. Behind it was a sledge, with dead dogs harnessed to it, almost wholly hidden by the drifting snow. There, then, men lay buried with all their possessions, as Eskimo custom prescribes.

All that we saw was new to us and absorbingly interesting. At last we were on Polar Eskimo ground, and our delight at having reached our goal was unmeasured. If only we had been spared the calamity of our comrade's serious illness! He lay dazed and feverish, unable to stir, and had to be fed when he required to eat. At a council among ourselves, it was agreed that Mylius-Erichsen should remain with him, keeping the two seal-hunters, while Jörgen Brönlund and I drove on

north as fast as our almost exhausted dogs could take us, to look for people. We calculated that at a distance of about sixty-four English miles from Cape York we ought to come across Eskimos at Saunders Island, and if not there, then at Natsilivik, some forty English miles farther north. All the provisions we could take were a few biscuits and a box of butter. Still, we had our rifles to fall back upon.

The sealers had gone out to try their luck, and we waited for them to return—which they did empty-handed. Then we drank a little cocoa, and drove off along the glorious rocky coast, into the clear, light night.

In the neighbourhood of Cape Atholl we discovered fresh sledge-tracks, which we followed up. They led to a stone cairn, under a steep wall of rock, which cairn contained a large deposit of freshly-caught bearded seal. Ah! then we could not be far from human beings. The intense suspense of it! For it almost meant our comrade's life.

We had driven all night—some twelve hours, and a little way beyond Cape Atholl were obliged to pull up, to give the dogs a rest and breathing time. We had covered about fifty-six English miles at full gallop, and, should we be forced to drive all the way to Natsilivik, should have to make reasonable allowance for the empty stomachs of our poor animals. We flung ourselves down on the ice, discussed our prospects, ate a little butter—we simply dared not eat our biscuits,—lay down on our sledges and went to sleep.

After three hours' rest we went on again.

We had only driven a little way, when a black dot became visible in front. It developed and grew into a sledge.

"Jörgen!—Knud!—Jörgen!—Knud!"

We were half mad with relief and delight, and could only call out each other's names.

Speed signal! The dogs drop their tails and prick up their ears. We murmur the signal again between our teeth, and the snow swirls up beneath their hind legs. A biting wind cuts us in the face. At last! at last! people, other people, the new people—the Polar Eskimos!

## FIRST MEETING WITH THE POLAR ESKIMOS 7

A long narrow sledge is coming towards us at full speed, a whip whistles through the air, and unfamiliar dog-signals are borne on the wind to our ears. A little fur-clad man in a pair of glistening white bearskin trousers springs from the sledge and runs up to his team, urging the dogs on still faster with shouts and gesticulations. Behind him, sitting astride the sledge, sits another person, dressed in blue fox, with a large pointed hat on her head: that is his wife.

Our dogs begin to bark, and the sledges meet to the accompaniment of loud yelps. We spring off and run up to



each other, stop and stare at one another, incapable of speech, both parties equally astonished.

I explain to him who we are, and where we come from.

"White men! white men!" he calls out to his wife. "White men have come on a visit!"

We have no difficulty in understanding or making ourselves understood.

I hasten to the woman, who has remained seated on the sledge. All sorts of strange emotions crowd in upon me, and I do not know what to say. Then, without thinking what I am doing, I hold out my hand. She looks at me, uncomprehending, and laughs. And then we all laugh together.

The man's name is Maisanguaq (the little white whale

skin), his wife Meqo (the feather); they live at Igfigsoq, from twelve to sixteen English miles south of our meeting-place, and we learn that three or four other families live at the same place.

In our eagerness to arrive at Agpat (Saunders Island) we had cut across outside the bay on which Igfigsoq lies.

The snow on the ice at the entrance to the bay being hard, we had not been able to detect sledge-tracks which might have led us to enter it. But when we heard that there were far more people at Agpat, and that the hunting and sealing there were particularly good, I decided to drive straight on, and, by sledge post, advise my comrades to do the same.

Maisanguaq promptly seated himself across my sledge, his wife driving theirs, and we all set off together towards Agpat, carrying on the liveliest conversation meanwhile. The two ought really to have been at home by this time, but had turned back to show us the way.

Meqo was a capital dog-driver, and wielded her long whip as well as any man. In West Greenland you never see a woman drive, so I expressed my surprise; Maisanguaq laughed out with pride, and called out to her gaily to lash hard with her whip, it amused the white men, and Meqo swung her whip, and off we dashed, she leading.

"tugto! tugto!" she cried, and the dogs bounded forward, and soon we began to near the high-lying little island on which Agpat lay.

Maisanguaq then told me that "many" people lived at Agpat: there were three stone houses and five snow huts; and he burst into peals of laughter each time he thought of the surprise he was going to witness. "White men! white men!" he called out, whenever an instant's pause in the conversation occurred, and rubbed his hands with glee.

Suddenly he stopped short and listened, then jumped up in my sledge and looked behind. Another sledge had come in sight a long way to our rear.

"aulavte! aulavte!" he called out. (That is the signal for a halt.) But my dogs did not understand him, and I had to come to the rescue by whistling to them.





Then he jumped out on the one side, and began to hop up in the air and slap himself on the legs. He continued to indulge in these extraordinary antics till he was quite red in the face from his exertions. This was an indication that something unusual was going on. The strange sledge came on at a gallop; as it approached, two young fellows sprang out and ran alongside, shouting. Maisanguaq began to yell too, and continued to flounder about like a madman.

At last the sledge came up to ours and stopped. The two young men were named Qulutana and Inukitsoq. First, of course, they wanted to know who we were, and Maisanguaq delivered himself of his lesson. Then the whole caravan drove on, laughing and shouting, towards Agpat.

Never in my life have I felt myself to be in such wild, unaccustomed surroundings, never so far, so very far away from home, as when I stood in the midst of the tribe of noisy Polar Eskimos on the beach at Agpat. We were not observed till we were close to the land, so the surprise and confusion created by our arrival were all the greater.

Maisanguaq recommenced his jumping antics by the side of the sledge as soon as we arrived within calling distance of the place, and then screamed out a deafening "White men! white men!"

The people, who had been moving briskly about among the houses, stood still, and the children left off their play.

"White men! white men!" repeated the young fellows who had joined us. Our dogs drooped their tails and pricked up their ears as a many-tongued roar from the land reached us. And then, like a mountain slide, the whole swarm rushed down to the shore, where we had pulled up—a few old grey-haired men and stiff-jointed old crones, young men and women, children who could hardly toddle, all dressed alike in these fox and bear-skin furs, which create such an extraordinarily barbaric first impression. Some came with long knives in their hands, with bloodstained arms and upturned sleeves, having been in the midst of flaying operations when we arrived, and all this produced a very savage effect; at the moment it was diffi-



cult to believe that these "savages," "the neighbours of the North Pole," as Astrup called them, were ever likely to become one's good, warm friends.

Our dogs were unharnessed, and quantities of meat flung to them at once. Meat there was in abundance, and everywhere, in between the houses, you saw cooking-hearths. It was immediately apparent that these people were not suffering from privation.

On one's arrival at a settlement in Danish West Greenland, it is usual for the young women to help the newcomers off with their outdoor clothes. Now, for a moment, I forgot where I was, and as the Greenlandic custom is, stretched out my foot towards a young girl who was standing by my side, meaning her to pull off my outer boots. The girl grew embarrassed, and the men laughed. There was that winning bashfulness about her that throws attraction over all Nature's children; a pale blush shot across her cheek, like a ripple over a smooth mountain lake; she half turned away from me, and her black eyes looked uneasily out over the frozen sea.

"What is thy name?"

"Others will tell thee what my name is," she stammered.

"Aininâq is her name," put in the bystanders, laughing.

A jovial old paterfamilias then came up to her and said with gravity—

"Do what the strange man asks thee!" And she stooped down at once and drew off my boots.

"Move away, let me come!" called out an old woman from the crowd, and she elbowed the people aside and forced her way through to my sledge.

"It was my daughter thou wast talking to!" she burst out eagerly. "Dost thou not think her beautiful?" and she rolled her little self-conscious eyes around.

But Aininâq had slipped quietly away from the crowd of curious beholders and hidden herself. It was only later that I learnt my request to her had been construed into a proposal of marriage.

Jörgen and I were now conducted up to the houses.

Sheltering walls of snow had been built up here and there to form cooking-places, and round these the natives clustered. A young fellow came up carrying a frozen walrus liver, raw, which was our first meal; all the men of the village ate of it with us, to show their hospitable intent. Curious youngsters gaped at us greedily from every side, and ran away when we looked at them.

When the pot had boiled, we were called in to the senior of the tribe, the magician Sagdloq ("The Lie"); the boiled meat was placed on the floor, and a knife put in our hands.

A lively conversation got under way. The people were not difficult to understand, as their dialect differed but little from the ordinary Greenlandic; they were surprised themselves at the ease with which they understood us, who yet came from such a distance.

After the meal, they immediately set about building us a snow hut.

"There is a sick man with you, so you must be helped quickly," they said.

They hewed large blocks out of the hard snow: those were to be the walls of our new house. Then they set it up in a hollow in the snow, and in the course of half-an-hour it stood complete.

A sledge was sent for our comrades, and by early morning we were all together.

The reception these pagan savages gave us was affectingly cordial; it seemed that they could not do enough for us. And just as they were on our arrival: helpful as they could possibly be, and most generous with their gifts,—so they remained the whole time that we spent among them.

Some bear-hunters were ranging the country south of Cape York, just during these days. They had met with good luck, and, laden with spoil—skins and meat,—were driving slowly home.

They were sitting half asleep on their sledges, languid from the April sunshine, and torpid after heavy eating.

Then the one in front was roused suddenly from his

slumbers by his dogs jerking violently at the traces and setting off at full speed. He was beginning to look out for bears, when the team stopped abruptly and began poking their noses into the snow. The driver leaned out to see if it were a seal's breathing-hole that they had found, then opened his eyes wide with amazement, at first not fully grasping what he saw. He jumped out of the sledge and shouted back to his comrades, who were jogging along behind: "Tracks! the tracks of strange sledges!"

The men crowded together and for a long time examined the strange phenomenon in silence. Some of them measured the footprints which astonished them, and compared them with their own, when they discovered that the strangers must be men much bigger than they were themselves. And the tracks of the sledges, too, were about three times as wide as theirs. (The Polar Eskimos use long and very narrow sledges, whereas the general Greenlandic type is shorter and much broader.)

"The trail of giants!" said one of them at last.

"Yes, the trail of huge sledges and big men!" murmured the others.

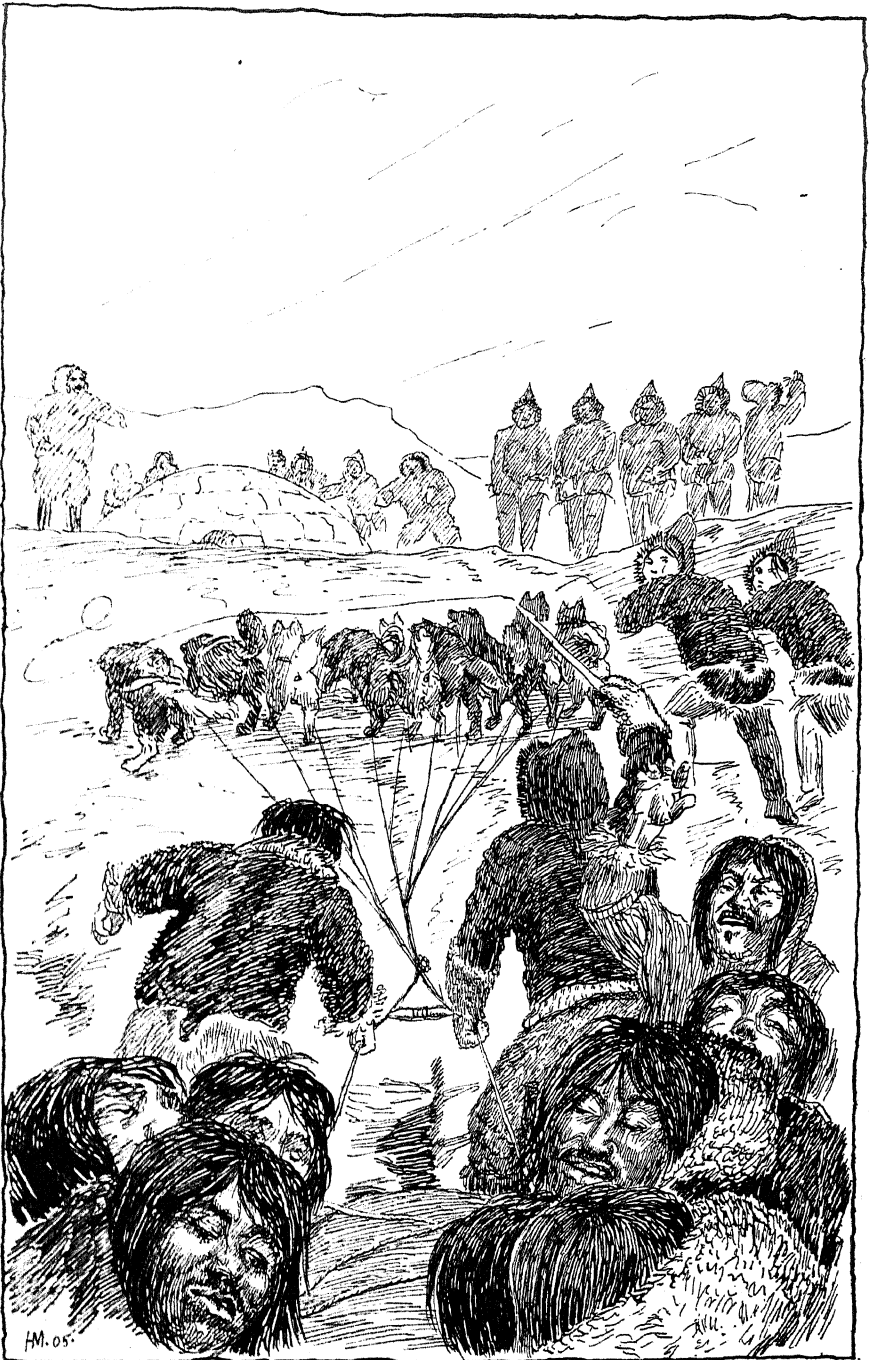
"And they have come from the south! Sledges never come that way!"

"And the trail is heading straight for Cape York!"

The bear-hunters were filled with dire misgivings, for who could these strangers be? Would they be friends, or men with hostile purpose? What they had heard of the tribes in the south was not encouraging. Rumour had it that they were fond of killing.

And their wives and children alone at the settlement at home! There was still a day's journey in front of them before they could hope to reach Cape York, so they put their dogs on the scent, and forced their pace to the utmost.

The first thing they saw at the abandoned settlement was the spot where our dogs had disported themselves. The Polar Eskimos, it appears, always keep their dogs fastened up. We, who were not aware of this custom, had loosed our dogs, and



COUNT HARALD MOLTKE'S ARRIVAL AT AGPAT



they had broken into a house and eaten a seal that had been left there. They had left marks of blood about after their meal, and these terrified the bear-hunters. Besides which, after the dogs had broken into the house, everything inside was in the wildest disorder.

This did not look as if the strangers had come with any friendly intent.

Late at night they continued their journey; the dogs were tired, and their progress was slow. But get forward they must, to solve the riddle and put an end to their suspense.

By midnight they drove round the promontory near Igfigsoq, where there were inhabitants. While still far out on the ice, the children from the village rushed out to meet them. They had run till they were quite out of breath, and they flung themselves, panting, on the sledges, as they called out the amazing news—

“White men! white men have come!”

## THE MAGICIAN'S LAST GREAT INSPIRATION

THE spring gales had blown themselves weary ; it was far into the month of May ; the sudden thaw had reduced the hillsides to tears, and the melted snow poured off them, while a few of the larger streams of water had even made an attempt to rend the covering ice. The sun sailed hot across the heavens and was so delighted at the approach of summer that he forgot to hide behind the horizon at all.

But the Eskimos, who knew that June, "the breeding month," always sees the final convulsions of the winter, regarded this rapid change to heat and sunshine merely as a curiosity. The snowstorms were only gathering strength, they thought, and time was to prove them in the right.

Still, there was no doubt that summer was really on the way. The ice round the village was torn by the current, and on the floes lazy seals lay sunning themselves. From out at sea came a long, monotonous roar and whistling,—the old he-walruses, who recognised the signs of the times, and were beginning to make their way in towards the land ; they knew that the ice was doomed. Down below the houses, in some of the larger openings in the ice, long-tailed ducks and black guillemots swam to and fro and wrangled, till their cries re-echoed from the steep cliff side. The eider-ducks had begun to ramble about the promontory ; you could hear the musical swish of their wings in the distance long before their arrival, in bevvies, in the breeding islands, each endeavouring to be first. Groups of women and children had taken up their position below the great bird-rock ; they lounged about on the loose stones in intent listening clusters ; the whole side of the cliff was alive, and a voluminous murmur

pealed out from all the moving mites on its ledges. The petrels and the razorbills had arrived!

Right up on the peak live the petrels; they sail through the air like white swirling flakes of snow, and look down with contempt on the razorbills, who build much lower, midway up the rock.

The razorbills arrive literally in shoals, and have hard work to find a resting-place; they patter about the shelves of rock, and look charmingly festive, with their white shirt-fronts. There is room enough, but there is quarrelling as to the particular dwelling; they peck at one another and screech vehemently,



but their angry abuse melts together, in human ears, to one great rolling wave of sound.

At the bottom, on the lowest of the rugged rocks, the gulls and the tiny kittiwakes make their homes and marvel at any one making such a fuss. They peer up at the swarms above, stretch their wings, hop about a little, then fold themselves up together again, and sink into profound reflection. Gulls are such wise birds.

But, occasionally, in the midst of all the uproar, a rattle and thunder will be heard from the summit and a mountain slide rush down. The heavens are darkened for a moment, as a cloud of petrels, razorbills, black guillemots, and gulls spreads screaming over the sea.

"Things are beginning to wake up out there; the summer



is coming!" the Eskimos say then. The children race up to the rock to pick up the dead birds. And soon large fires are alight, to cook the first bird-catch of the year. And of that every one must taste.

It was just such a day as I have described: there was growth in the very air, and unrest among men and women. Some of the young girls had flung off their clothes, and were playing catch on a flat open space; this roused the men to mirth too, and merrily they joined in the game.

One old Eskimo had spread out a reindeer skin on the ground, and was revelling in the sunshine without a stitch upon him. By his side sat his daughter, in the same Edenic costume, nursing her little baby. Down on the seashore, at the edge of the ice, lay the dogs with tongues hanging out of their mouths, panting with the heat. All over the country hung the heavy spring haze which the sun sometimes draws up out of the awakening earth; and everybody was happy and good, and took no thought save for the day the sun gave.

Then a shout rang through the village, and brought all to their feet. The effect of it was like that of an avalanche of stones on the birds. The shout was not repeated; it had been heard, and all hurried down towards the house where Sagdloq lived.

Sagdloq was the greatest and oldest magician of the tribe, and he had just announced to his fellow-villagers that he was about to conjure up spirits. His wife was ill, and he wished to try to cure her.

His hut was near the sea. The people, therefore, collected down at the ice's edge; the sick woman was seated on a sledge among the rest, and her son stood by her side. Up on the roof, close to the window, sat the magician Kale, who had learnt his art from old Sagdloq; he must consequently be near his master; but Sagdloq himself was alone in the house.

All work in the settlement ceased: none dared to move. When I came up, I was enjoined to stand still. Every face bore the imprint of earnest reverence.



AININÂQ



Sagdloq came of an old and much feared family. His paternal uncle and his nephew had both been murdered, as soul-stealers, and Sagdloq was the only one still living, said his countrymen, who had inherited the wisdom of his forefathers. For instance, no other magician could crawl out of his skin, and then draw it on again; but he could do that. Any man who saw a magician in this state, "flesh-bare," would die, they declared.

Such a man was Sagdloq.

He had not conjured spirits for a long time, for he had been ill. That very day he had been drawn about among the houses on a sledge, for his legs were stiff with rheumatism. And yet now he was preparing to go through these exhausting ceremonies.

When I had gone up to the house, I peeped in at him through the window. He was sitting alone on the raised stone sleeping-place, which in the daytime serves as a seat in Eskimo houses, beating on his drum. When he saw my face at the window he stopped beating the drum, laughed up at me, and said: "All foolery, silly humbug! Nothing but lies!" ("pilugsing-nartunga, maungainarssuaq oqalutsiarnialermiunga, sagdlutsiarnialermiunga!")

And he wagged his head apologetically.

I nodded, and was about to ask him a question, when I was violently seized by the shoulder from behind and dragged from the window. My assailant was one of our Christian Greenlanders, Gabriel by name, who cherished a very great respect for the heathen mysteries.

"Art thou mad, going right up to him?" he whispered in my ear.

But Kale, sitting on the roof, and waiting upon the words of the old wise man, looked down on us ignorant Christians, and said with dignity—

"Go aside, and be still. No one moves while spirit conjurations are proceeding!"

I took up my position by a neighbouring house and waited for what should come. All foolery! the old man had said, with

genuine Eskimo sham modesty. A magician always precedes his conjurations with a few depreciating words about himself and his powers. And the more highly esteemed he is, the more anxious he is to pretend that his words are lies.

The drum began again inside the house, and the people round stood listening silently. Soon a murmur mingled with the beating of the drum, and the old man's voice grew gradually louder and stronger; before long the spirit song was sounding steadily and monotonously from the inside of the hut.

Kale sat on the roof, more and more affected; involuntarily



he joined in the singing, at first only humming to himself. Old Sorqaq, who was also a magician, stood in the midst of the crowd and gave vent to approving grunts at intervals. He had come just as he was from his flensing, with upturned sleeves and crimson arms. All the rest stood mute and motionless, gazing up at the house whence the sound issued.

Suddenly the singing ceased; drum beats followed each other more and more quickly. Old Sagdloq began to groan, as though he were lying beneath a heavy weight that almost robbed him of breath. All at once he uttered a wild shriek which made his hearers start.

"ajornarê, ajornarê! atdliulerpunga! ikiorniarsinga, artorssarpavssualeqissunga!" ("Ow! ow! it is impossible! I am

underneath! He is lying on me. Help me! I am too weak, I am not equal to it!")

And the shrieks, which seemed the expression of genuine horror, died away in convulsive sobbing. But the drum beat on, wildly and more wildly! Old Kale, on the roof, with tears in his eyes, sang a spirit song with all his might.

"Make haste! Put out all your strength!" (agsororsingnarit) bawled Sorqaq excitedly. Then the drum stopped for a moment, and there was a deep silence. The excitement of the auditors grew.

But soon old Sagdloq seized his drum again, and, after a few introductory beats on the skin, called out, in a voice so loud that it might have been the effort of a young pair of lungs: "perdlugssuaq, tornârssugssuaq, qavdlunârssuit" ("The Evil Fate,—misfortune-bringing spirit,—the white men")! The words came jerkily, disconnectedly, and did not fail of the mystic effect intended. The rest was awaited in breathless suspense, but his voice broke off in a long-drawn, moaning groan. Kale was shrieking himself hoarse with his spirit song, Sorqaq kept on shouting. It seemed as though Sagdloq were fetching his words from a long distance, as though he were struggling with an invisible being.

Then again there was a long howl, and when excitement was at its height, Sagdloq called out the whole pronouncement. It produced a shock.

"The white men brought the Evil Fate with them, they had a misfortune-bringing spirit with them. I saw it myself, there are no lies in my mouth; I do not lie, I am no liar, I saw it myself!"

Gabriel the Greenlander's face blanched at his words. "He means us!" he whispered. "He will bring evil upon us." And all looked in our direction.

Sagdloq went on to explain that we had met the Evil Fate on our way, in the shape of a spirit, and that it had touched Harald Moltke's sledge; that was the reason he had fallen ill. We others had only had our dogs infected, and that was why illness had broken out among the dogs.

His elucidation was difficult to follow, as he frequently made use of a special spirit language, and often broke off his speech with howls.

"t--t--t--tau, tait!  
 tain-----taingôq---  
 ku, ku, ku, ki, ki,--  
 ajornarê, ajornarê!  
 artulerpara, artulerpara!  
 ikiorniarsingaula, --nauk!"

Which, translated, means :—

"P--p--p--peo--ople,----  
 they say, that people-----  
 ku--ku--ku--ki--ki  
 I cannot, cannot,  
 I have not strength enough, not strength enough---,  
 but is there no one who will help me?"

He left the words unfinished, and broke off without concluding clauses, in the midst of a frightful hubbub; the house seemed to be full of people wrestling and groaning and dealing violent blows.

Kale sat on, repeating his master's fragmentary sentences: he was hoarse from singing. But Sorqaq, the old bear-hunter, was indefatigable in his shouts: "Make haste! make haste!" and only when the old man, as usual, had worked the excitement of his hearers up to its highest pitch, did he give utterance to his explanations, slowly, and with effort, as though he had to wrest each word from an invisible opponent.

The white men had come with the illness, but only the dogs would be ill. So no human beings were to eat dog's flesh.

"Has Mikissoq (the Little One: this was his wife) eaten dogs' flesh?"

"Has Mikissoq eaten dog's flesh?" called down Kale.

"Mikissoq, hast thou eaten dog's flesh?" asked Sorqaq of her. The words passed from mouth to mouth. The son, Agpalinguaq, bent down over his sick mother, and she nodded.

"Yes, just a very little, I wanted a little dog's meat so badly," replied the woman.



KALE





"She has tasted dog's flesh," Sorqaq called out.

"Thy wife has eaten dog's flesh," repeated Kale from the roof, in through the window.

Then a savage roar was heard from within the house, and the drum began again: Too—too—to—too, repeated interminably, and with extraordinary vigour. It was like the snorting of a locomotive engine. Sagdloq was in a state of complete ecstasy; the rheumatic old man sprang about the floor like a wounded animal. His eyes were shut and he moved and twisted his head and body in remarkable contortions to the music of the drum. Then he uttered one long howl, with peculiar refrains. Human laughter seemed to be mingling with the lament, which ended at last in a quiet sobbing.

He could not save his wife!

The people separated and went back to their work and play. Soon the village rang once more with the laughter of happy men and women. The thought that the summer was coming drove away all care, and who was going to trouble their heads about the warnings of an old magician?

Sorqaq was the only one who looked distressed. He was engaged in the flensing of four seals that his sons had brought home.

"Sagdloq is growing old," he said to me. "Sagdloq is losing his power. His wife will die."

This was Sagdloq's last great inspiration; his wife died when the summer came.

Shortly after her burial, people began to report that Sagdloq would not leave his tent. No one could get him to take food, and he refused to speak.

I went down then to see him. He was sitting in a heap on the stone sleeping-place, and had already grown strangely yellow in the face. His excoriated eyelids were bleeding.

When I went in, he signed to me, with a movement of his hand, to sit down; and, interrupted by constant fits of coughing, he explained himself: "You are a stranger, to you I am glad to speak; I act as I am doing because life is no longer good, for me. I am too old to be alone. She who looked after my

clothes and prepared my food for so many years is dead. For many years I have lived with her, and it is best that I follow her."

I went softly away; I did not like to intrude upon him. And I did not visit him again.

The villagers came and brought him food, which they left in his tent. But he was never heard to speak after that. Old Sagdloq literally starved himself to death; but all the gifts of meat that his countrymen had brought to the last in the tribe who had inherited the wisdom of his forefathers, lay heaped up by his body.

## A TRIBAL MIGRATION

AMONG the Smith Sound Eskimos I met with some members of a foreign Eskimo tribe who had emigrated to the Cape York district, probably from the country round Baffinsland, a good fifty years before. They had become quite merged into the Cape York tribe, through wife-changing and inter-marriage. They were generally taller than the Greenlanders, and of markedly Indian type.

Three or four of the actual immigrants are still living. One of these, old Merqusâq, gave me the following details of the journey. This is probably the only example we have come in contact with among the Eskimos, of any of them, without any external influence from civilisation having been brought to bear, and with only their own primitive means to assist them, having undertaken an actual tribal migration, a journey lasting several years, from one Polar region to another. And the information which I gathered from those who had taken part in the expedition throws light over the manner in which all the tribal migrations among the Eskimos must have been carried out in former times.

### OLD MERQUSÂQ NARRATES

I shall, in the following, keep to Merqusâq's own account. His personal history is a living illustration of the existence the Eskimos must have led in the days when generation after generation grew up and died on their travels.

Merqusâq's mother gave birth to him on the ice during a winter journey ; where, he does not know, further than that it was at some place on the other side of the sea. He was born on a journey, and all his life has been spent journeying. Although old now, and somewhat bowed from rheumatism,

he continues his journeys of several hundred miles a year, on arduous fishing and hunting expeditions, and he says he will not stop till his soul leaves this earth and journeys up to the great hunting-grounds of heaven.

Over on the other side of the sea there lived many Inuit (Eskimos), he said, and his parents belonged to the most northerly dwelling of them. They had no white men living among them, but occasionally their country was touched at by large ships. White men on these ships had once told them that there were many Inuit far, far away on the other side of the Great Sea. This announcement had made a great impression upon Qitdlarssuaq.

"Qitdlarssuaq was the greatest magician in the tribe, and many legends were told concerning him. Shall we not hear a little about him first, before I tell about our great journey? Thou, Panigpak, knowest so many things about him. He was thy grandfather, was he not?"

Merqusâq and I were paying a visit to Panigpak. Panigpak was the son of an immigrant, Itsukusuk, and was a gentle man with a pair of unusually intelligent eyes. As a rule he was not very talkative, and generally sat smiling quietly at all that the others said without himself taking part in the conversation. But if one asked him anything, and the question interested him, there was always silence in the tent, while, with his slightly hesitating speech, he held his guests captive with his tales. Panigpak was a great hunter, and in every respect a man to whom all were ready to listen.

"Qitdlarssuaq," began Panigpak, "my mighty grandfather, the great man—yes, for the Inuit always obeyed him, for they were afraid of him—I saw him before he went away, when, as a little child, I had discovered my understanding, and had learnt to distinguish one person from another. I was fond of him because he used to put me on his knee and sing spirit songs to me. His hair was thin, like the white men's. His great forehead was not covered with hair. It would seem that I take after him in that. See!"

And he pointed to his hair, which was unusually thin.



PANIGPAK



"My great grandfather, the magician without opponents—there was no one who dared to oppose him—has himself grown into a legend that folk repeat.

"It was over on the other side of the sea that once upon a time he was with another, reindeer-hunting, and during the chase they came suddenly upon a broad road, up in the mountains. They began to follow it, and a storm came on that blew them forward, till they were obliged to run. The broad road led them to a house, a large house, such as the white men build. They went in. On the stone sleeping-place inside lounged two big women; and one of them began to talk, and pointed to the other.

"‘She, there, is not of our race,’ said the one who was talking, and when she had said this Qitdlarssuaq’s hunting companion felt himself powerfully drawn towards the strange woman, and he sprang up and lay down by her side, and the strange woman covered him up with her blanket. When they had lain there for a little, and the others lifted the blanket, there he lay dead by her side.

"‘I wonder whether they will kill me too?’ thought my grandfather.

"‘No,’ suddenly said the woman who had first spoken, even before my grandfather had revealed his thought. ‘No, we dare do nothing to thee! Thou art fire!’ she said. I do not know what that was supposed to mean. But it was as though she saw my grandfather’s thoughts palpably before her, without his requiring to speak. So he thought it would be best for him to go, and the woman knew it without his needing to say it.

"‘Wait a little,’ she said, and took a large feather and fanned the breath of life into his dead hunting companion. And he came back to life again. And the woman placed food before them and said, ‘Eat before you go!’ And when they had eaten they went. And the moment they found themselves on the road again a storm rose once more and carried them with it till they were obliged to run.

"Then they saw a house and crept in to rest. And as



they lay there, they were awakened by many men coming, and heard them jumping about on the roof.

"Then Qitdlarssuaq sprang out on the floor, and they heard only the cries of the fleeing men outside.

"Then they slept the night there, and next day travelled home.

"Another time Qitdlarssuaq was hunting with an orphan. They were bear-hunting. They drove a long way out to sea, and had lost sight of land; and while they were far out, suddenly there arose a gale that split the ice up into floating floes. Nowhere was there even one narrow bridge to the land. And the gale was driving them out to sea.

"'Lie down in the sledge and shut your eyes!' called out Qitdlarssuaq to the orphan. 'If you open them even once, we are both dead men.'

"And the orphan lay down in the sledge, and his eyelids were as if they had been glued together. And, as he lay there, he suddenly noticed that the sledge and the dogs were moving rapidly in towards land. And they were going along at a furious pace. Then the orphan grew curious, and raised his left eyelid just a very little. And behold! Qitdlarssuaq had turned himself into a bear, and he was trotting along, pursued by his own dogs, and wherever he trod, the sea became ice which bore the sledge and the dogs. All at once the one runner sank through the ice and the orphan was all but drowned, and he made haste, and no mistake, to shut his eyes again.

"Thus they drove on for a long time; then suddenly the dogs stopped.

"'Get up and look about you,' said Qitdlarssuaq, and he was standing in his own shape by the side of the sledge, on land.

"But when the boy looked out where they had driven, it was all foaming sea. So great a power had Qitdlarssuaq when he was a young man. But you, Merqusâq, do you tell what it was you wished to say. Or I could easily talk you to sleep with tales about the great man, my grandfather. And the sun is still high in the heavens!" concluded Panigpak.



THE WIFE OF PANIGPAK



"Yes, I will tell you, since you have asked me," said Merqusâq, turning to me. "I have travelled up here to Agpat (Saunders Island) because I heard that you wanted to talk to me." (Merqusâq was living that year near Kangerdlugssuaq, some eighty miles farther north.) "But thou knowest, talking and tales belong to the evenings and the nights.

"After Qitdlarssuaq had once heard that there were Inuit over on the other side of the sea, he could never settle down to anything again. He held great conjurations of spirits in the presence of all the people of the village. He made his soul take long journeys through the air, with his helping spirits, to look for the country of the strange Inuit. At last one day he informed his fellow-villagers that he had found the new country! And he told them that he was going to journey to the strange people, and he exhorted them all to follow him.

"'Do you know the desire for new countries? Do you know the desire to see new people?' he said to them.

"And nine sledges joined him at once, and ten sledges together they set out northward to find the new country that Qitdlarssuaq said he had seen on his soul-flight. There were men, women, and children, thirty-eight in all, who started. There were—

- |                          |                                   |
|--------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1. Kutdloq.              | 14. Uvdlalâq.                     |
| 2. His wife Talikitsoq.  | 15. His wife Inûguk.              |
| 3. Their daughter Kunuk. | 16. His daughter Arnaviaq.        |
| 4. Their son Sarpineq.   | 17. Oqaitdlaq.                    |
| 5. Apâpât.               | 18. Nateravik.                    |
| 6. His wife Inûguk.      | 19. Inûguk.                       |
| 7. Their daughter Inuk.  | 20. The woman Ningiulau-<br>ngat. |
| 8. Qingmigajuk.          | 21. Qatsôq.                       |
| 9. His wife Angileq.     | 22. Arnarssuaq.                   |
| 10. Ulaijuk.             | 23. Oqé.                          |
| 11. Inuk.                | 24. His wife Arnakutsuk.          |
| 12. Agpâpik.             | 25. Mamarunaq.                    |
| 13. His wife Tapaitsiaq. |                                   |

- |   |                          |
|---|--------------------------|
| 26. His wife Manik.                     | 32. Igtugsârssua.        |
| 27. Minik (afterwards the<br>murderer). | 33. Merqusâq.            |
| 28. Piuaitsoq, his wife.                | 34. Qitdlarssuaq.        |
| 29. Avôrtungiaq, their son.             | 35. His wife Aipak.      |
| 30. Qumangâpik, his wife.               | 36. Mâtâq.               |
| 31. Patdloq, their daughter.            | 37. His wife Tuluarssuk. |
|   | 38. Their son Sitdluk.   |

"We started on our journey in the winter, after the light came, and set up our permanent camp in the spring, when the ice broke. There were plenty of animals for food on the way, seals, white whales, walruses, and bears. Long stretches of the coast along which we had to drive were not covered with ice, and so we were often obliged to make our way over huge glaciers. On our way we also came to bird rocks, where auks built, and to some eider-duck islands.

"As we carried all our belongings with us, clothes, tents, hunting and fishing implements, kayaks, we used very long narrow sledges." (He gave me the measure of the sledges, which were twenty feet long and four feet wide.) "We had to have our sledges so long because the kayaks were carried on them. We had fastened whalebone, or walrus tusks, to our runners. Whalebone in particular made extraordinarily light running, especially in the spring, when the sun began to warm the snow and ice. But the lightest of all to pull, under a sledge runner, is the thick skin of the walrus. But this does not hold on pack ice. We had as many as twenty dogs for our sledges, with traces of varying length. It is not wise to drive so many dogs in a row with traces all the same length; they prevent each other pulling properly, when the number exceeds twelve. The outer ones, too, will pull at too sharp an angle from the sledge, unless you have impossibly long reins; and reins too long would not be wise, because the weight is felt more, the farther the dogs are from the sledge. We did not have up-rights on our sledges. When we had to descend a snow-covered glacier we lashed thongs round our tires, so that they should not run too easily, and fastened the thongs to the

back part of the sledge, so that we could pull at them as we went down hill. On these sledges, besides our baggage, we could also drive our wives and children ; and we could ride on them ourselves, too, when there was good going.

" At the season when the ice breaks up, we used to choose a good fishing-place and strike permanent camp, and there we hunted supplies for the winter with our kayaks. Towards the autumn we built stone houses, which we roofed with turf ; in these houses we spent the dark season, until the light came again, and we were able to continue our journey.

" We had travelled thus for two winters, and neither year had we lacked food. Then it so happened that one of the oldest amongst us, old Oqé, grew homesick. He had long been grave and without words, then all at once he began to talk about whale-beef. He was homesick for his own country, and he wanted to eat whale-beef again. In our old country at home we used to catch many whales.

" After he had once started talking, he began to accuse old Qitdlarssuaq, who had been the leader all through the journey, of cheating. He said it was all lies that Qitdlarssuaq had told about the new country, and he invited them all to turn back.

" Then a great dissension arose between the old men. The travellers divided themselves up into those who held with Qitdlarssuaq and those who believed in Oqé, and meanwhile the two old men argued, each in support of his own assertion ; Qitdlarssuaq said that Oqé was envious, because he was not the leader himself, and Oqé declared that Qitdlarssuaq was simply deceiving his fellow-countrymen in order to gain influence over them. The quarrel ended by five sledges turning back, while five went on. Twenty-four people turned back, and fourteen went on, and amongst these latter was Oqé's own son, Minik.

" This happened after two winterings.

" Qitdlarssuaq and the people who believed in his words then journeyed farther north. He assured them that it was not much farther to the new country, and encouraged them to hold out. He was always the first to break up camp, and he

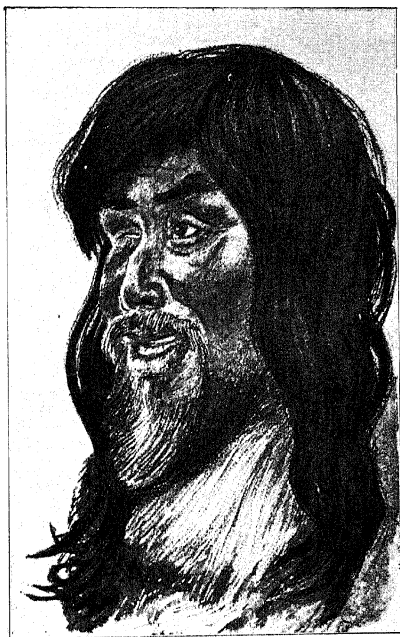
always drove the first sledge. He was stronger than the young men, and more enduring, although his hair was white. Those who drove after him declared that often, as they toiled along after dark, they saw a white flame burning above his head: so great was he in his might.

"Late in the spring we came to a place where the sea narrowed to a small channel. (Before this we had crossed two very broad inlets or fjords.) Here Qitdlarssuaq pitched camp and conjured spirits. His soul took an air-flight over the sea, while his body lay lifeless behind. When the incantation was over, he announced that it was here that we were to cross the sea. On the other side we should meet with people. And all obeyed him, for they knew that he understood the hidden things.

"So we crossed the sea, which was frozen over, and camped on the opposite coast. There we found houses, human habitations, but no people. They had left the place. But we understood then that we had very little farther to go before meeting with people, and a great joy filled us all; our veneration for the man who for years had led us towards the distant goal knew no bounds.

"It was decided that we should not seek further for the time being, but should first try to get in supplies, as the catch had for a long time been poor. The animals had been made invisible to us. And Qitdlarssuaq held an incantation to find out the reason of the failure of the fishery. After the incantation he announced that his daughter-in-law, Ivaloq, had had a miscarriage, but had kept the matter secret, to escape penance. That was why the animals had been invisible. And so he ordered his son to shut up his wife in a snow-hut as a punishment, after having first taken her furs from her. In the snow-hut she would either freeze to death or die of hunger. Before this came to pass, the animals would not allow themselves to become the prey of men.

"And they built a snow-hut at once and shut Ivaloq up in it. This Qitdlarssuaq did with his son's wife, whom he loved greatly; and he did it, that the innocent should not suffer for her fault.



MERQUSÂQ





"Immediately after the punishment had been carried into effect, we came upon a large herd of reindeer, inland, and had meat in abundance. This was at Etâ.

"While we were there, there was a cry one day of 'Sledges! sledges!' And we saw two sledges approaching, sledges from a strange people. And they saw us and drove up to us.

"They were people of the tribe we had been looking for so long. The one man was called Arrutsak, the other Agîna, and their home was at a place called Pitoravik, not far from where we were encamped. We shouted aloud with joy; for now we had found new country, and new people. And our great magician had proved himself greater than all who had doubted him.

"Arrutsak was a man with a wooden leg. Once upon a time he had fallen from a bird rock, as we learnt later, and had had his one leg broken. His mother had cut off the injured part of the leg and made him a wooden leg which could be bound fast to the stump. He could run and drive just as well as if he had never lost a limb. But when we saw him come running up the first time with his wooden leg, many of us supposed that it was usual, and that the new people always had one leg made of wood.

"We sat down at once to eat with the new arrivals, and they told us many things about the people we were going to see. During the meal a thing happened that amused us all.

"It was customary in our tribe that, when eating together in a friendly way, all should eat from the same bone. When a piece of meat was handed to one, he just took a bite from it, and passed on the remainder to those with whom he was taking his meal. We call that Amerqatut. But every time that we handed the new arrivals a piece of meat, of which they were only intended to eat a mouthful, they ate the whole piece; and so it was a long time before we others could get anything to eat, as they were very hungry.

"That was a custom the new people were not acquainted with, but now they have all adopted it.

"After the meal all the men drove over to Pitoravik, to visit the new people, the women being fetched only later. But during the jubilation of the meeting, Itsukusuk released his wife Ivaloq from the snow-hut in which she had been shut up, and thus saved her life. No one said anything, for they were all thinking only of their great joy. It was a long time before Ivaloq recovered. She had no flesh at all left, and was terribly exhausted.

"Thus it was that Qitdlarssuaq led us all to new countries and new people.

"We taught these people many things. We showed them how to build snow-huts with long tunnel passages and an entrance from below. When you build snow-huts that way, there comes no draught into the room where you sit. The people here did build snow-huts before we came, but knew nothing of an entrance from below.

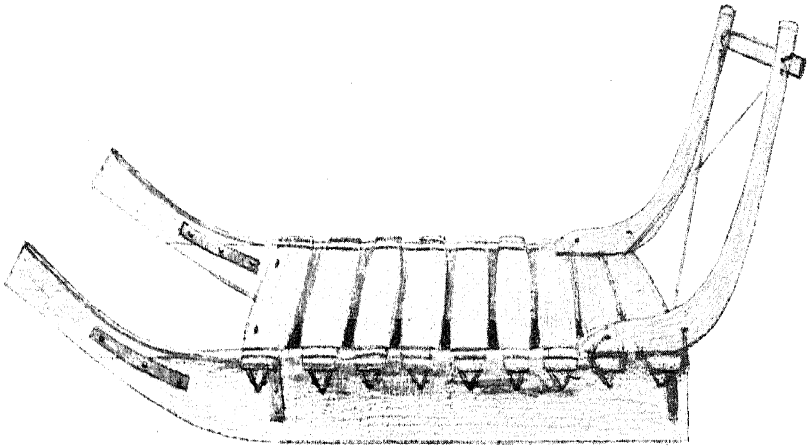
"We taught them to shoot with bow and arrows. Before our arrival they did not hunt the many reindeer that are in their country. If by any chance they got an animal, they did not even dare to eat it, being afraid that they might die, but they fed their dogs with it.

"We taught them to spear salmon in the streams. There were a great many salmon in the country, but they did not know the implement that you spear them with.

"And we taught them to build kayaks, and to hunt and catch from kayaks. Before that they had only hunted on the ice, and had been obliged during the spring to catch as many seals, walruses, and narwhals as they would want for the summer, when the ice had gone. They generally went for the summer to the islands where the eider duck hatched, or near razorbill rocks, as here at Agpat, or inland, or to a country where the Little Auks bred. They told us that their forefathers had known the use of the kayak, but that an evil disease had once ravaged their land, and carried off the old people. The young ones did not know how to build new kayaks, and the old people's kayaks they had buried with their owners. This was how it had come about that kayak hunting had been forgotten.



ESKIMO SLEDGE (CAPE YORK)



THE USUAL GREENLANDIC DOG-SLEDGE (DISCO BAY)



A NANSEN SLEDGE WITHOUT UPRIGHTS



"But we adopted their type of sledge, for it was better than ours, and had uprights on it.

"All the people took us in as kinsmen, and we stayed here many years without thinking of returning home. But it came to pass that old Qitdlarssuaq was again taken with the desire for a long journey. He was very old then, with children and children's children. But he said that he wished to see his own country again before he died. And he announced that he was going to start back. He had been among the new people then for six years. All those who had followed him here were unwilling to desert him, and made ready to start back with him. Only his son, Itsukusuk, decided to remain, because he had a little child who was ill.

"I was a half-grown boy when I arrived here; then I had just taken a wife, and I decided at once to go back with the others. My brother, Qumangâpik, did the same.

"A man from the tribe here named Erè, with his wife and little child, now joined themselves to us who had grown anxious to return to our country. He thought he would like to see our land. And so we drove away.

"Qitdlarssuaq never saw his country again. He died during the first wintering. And after his death things went very ill with us all. During our second wintering we had not food supplies enough for the winter, and during the great darkness, famine broke out among us. We were near a large lake where we caught a few salmon. But it was not enough. Most of our travelling companions had bellies too large, and they began to starve.

"Qitdlarssuaq's wife, Agpâq, and my father and mother and Erè's, died of hunger. And those who were left, and who refused the salmon, began to eat the dead bodies. Minik and Mâtâq were the worst. I saw them eat my father and my mother. I was too young and could not stop them. Then one day Minik flung himself upon me from behind, to kill me and eat me. But fortunately my brother came up just then, and Minik only had time to thrust out my one eye, after which he rushed out of the house. Then we saw him and Mâtâq

break into a neighbouring house and each take a dead body over his shoulders and flee up into the mountains. Before they disappeared, we heard them call down snow and snowstorms. That was so that their footprints might be covered up. And we never saw anything more of them.

“Then my brother, his wife, and his two children (one of his children had already died of hunger), and I and my wife left our dwelling and decided to turn back. We did not get far. It was the dark season, and a very great cold set in, and there was nothing to catch. On this journey my brother lost his wife, who went astray on a glacier, and did not return. We had to stay where we were and build snow-huts, and, as we had no food, we were obliged to eat our dogs. That left us of course without teams. And when we wanted to continue our journey, we were obliged to harness ourselves to our sledges and pull them.

“The fifth year after our departure with Qitdlarssuaq we arrived back again here, after having endured great hardships. It is a difficult matter to cover long distances when you have no teams, and it is difficult to procure food without dogs. But the man who spends his life travelling must often put up with ungentle conditions. I will finish by just telling you what happened to my brother Qumangâpik.

“He was married four times altogether, and, by the four marriages, had fifteen children. His first wife, Patdloq, went astray on a snow-covered glacier and froze to death; his second wife, Ivaloq, was buried under an avalanche, and frozen to death; his third wife, Nujaliaq, died of illness; and his fourth wife, Eqagssuaq, was frozen to death. Of his fifteen children, one was starved to death, four were frozen, and five died of illness. Qumangâpik himself was frozen to death during a snowstorm.

“I will tell you about his death.

“They were living the first part of the winter that year at Etâ, but when their meat was nearly at an end, and their blubber too, and they were in danger of being obliged to sit in their houses with lamps out—they were sixteen souls,—they



OVER PACK ICE





determined to go south, where they knew that there was abundance of provisions of all sorts. When they had crossed the great snowfield near Etâ—it was just at the coming of the light, the season when the cold and gales are always at their worst—they were overtaken by a snowstorm ; and, as there were several women and little children with them, they began at once to build snow-huts. Qumangâpik, who was a very old man at that time, worked too vigorously at cutting blocks of snow and building huts, and perspired heavily.

“When the building was finished, he must suddenly have got very cold, drenched as he was with perspiration, and, as they had no blubber with which to light the lamp in the snow-hut, he was frozen to death, together with his wife and two little children. I can only think of that way in which the cold could have killed him. For he always used to be stronger than it.

“There were eleven who died.

“When the snowstorm was over, four were left alive, namely, Aleqa, Qaingaq, Pualuna, and Inoqusiaq. When they had eaten their dogs, they tried to make their way south to Serfalik, where I was living with my wife. But when they discovered how weak and tired they all were, they were obliged to leave Inoqusiaq behind, he being the most exhausted. They put a little dog’s flesh in the hut for him, but it turned out later that soon after they had left him he had been frozen to death.

“Aleqa, a middle-aged woman, and Pualuna, her son of about twenty, were likewise quickly tired. And so Qaingaq was obliged to put them on a sledge and push them to Serfalik on it. So those three were saved. Afterwards I went up to look for those who had been frozen to death. I had thought of burying my brother and his family ; but it proved impossible, as they were quite covered with snow, and fast frozen in drifts. Certainly here and there part of an arm or leg projected, but you could not get a whole body out without injury. I had no spade to dig them out with. They had died just at the edge of the ice.

“When the spring comes and the sun melts the ice, and the edge of the ice rushes down into the sea, they will go with it and

find their grave. Yes, now I have told you of things I do not care to talk of. But what does not one do for a well-loved guest to one's country?

"When thou goest home to thy fellow-countrymen, thou canst tell them what thou hast just heard. Tell them that thou didst meet me, when I was still stronger than death. Thou seest that my own eye is blinded. Minik thrust it out for me, when he desired to satisfy his hunger with my flesh. Look at my body: it is covered with deep scars; those are the marks of bears' claws. Death has been near me many times,—my family are disappearing; I shall soon be the only one left; but as long as I can hold a walrus and kill a bear, I shall still be glad to live."

## THE OLD BEAR-HUNTER

ONE day in the late spring, when the storm, as usual, was lashing our tent, and the snow sweeping in through the chinks, we heard peculiar sounds issuing from the neighbouring tent. A great many people were shouting together, loud remarks were followed by outbursts of laughter, but a monotonous song cut through the midst of the noise, and, quite unaffected by interruptions, went serenely on, a rhythmic, somewhat snuffling music.

There was a concert going on at Sorqaq's. A few little boys were sent across to us with an invitation, and soon we, too, were lying among the half-naked men and women on the bear-skin rug which covered the sleeping-place. Two men, Majaq and Ilanguaq, were singing the usual duet, an Eskimo "song without words." They sang it with knees slightly bent, and body tilted forward, swinging their heads to and fro to the accompaniment of contortions of the trunk and genuflections, and the whole of this extraordinary *danse du ventre* was accompanied by a little bladder drum, beaten by the one who was leading the singing. The opposite party stood upright, facing him, and sang too, but without movements. When a part was finished, he brought up a stick, which he was holding between his two fingers, to the singer's face, and ended the tune with discordant shrieks.

The melodies themselves are perhaps the most primitive form of song that exists. They range over some five to six notes, yet can be drawn out and varied infinitely. The difference between the melodies is so slight that one needs a keen ear to detect it. Every singer has his own tunes (pisia) which he has composed himself. There are never words to them when they are merely sung for amusement; it is only when the drum

singing is associated with spirit incantations that a text is improvised.

Majaq was singing. The light fell strongly in through the tent's thin bladder curtain<sup>1</sup> and its rays broke against his handsome face. He did not resemble in the least the type that is usually regarded as Eskimo. His face was narrow and clear cut, his nose slightly aquiline. His long hair fell down loosely over his shoulders. Buoyant and fiery in his movements, he was much more like a gipsy than an Eskimo.

The singing had gone on for an hour, the same tune all the time. The time had become somewhat quicker, and the contortions of the singer's torso more rapid and pronounced. Curious buzzing sounds issued from his lips, and his body moved in time with them. His tightly closed eyes trembled with excitement, and the perspiration poured down from his naked body. His only garment was a pair of bearskin breeches.

Majaq sang on, far away from everything and everybody. The people on the rug had ceased their chatter, and the women, with their high, piping sopranos, were joining in, singing the same arbitrary, inspired measure. The chorus was increasing steadily in voices and volume.

It was all monotonous and primitive, the notes, the movements, the rapture, and no sudden raising of the pitch in the tune seemed to stimulate the imagination; still it was music to these Polar Eskimos, and music it was to us.

And it was more; it was an experience. Even up here, then, among these people with no conception of civilised culture; even here, in this land of polar bears, walruses, and blue foxes, music, quite different in kind from that to which we are acquainted, it is true, but music nevertheless, was a necessity of life and a passion.

The opposite party brought up his stick with a sudden dash to the other's face, and the song broke off in a long, unmelodious howl.

Our host, old Sorqaq, then invited his guests to partake

<sup>1</sup> These curtains are composed of gut, split and stitched together.—G. H.





of rotten walrus-flesh, frozen, which is esteemed one of the greatest delicacies that can be offered to one's friends. It is by no means an easy matter to get high meat up there, where the thermometer so seldom indicates many degrees above zero, even in the height of summer. It is only the spring catch that can be kept long enough to get high, and even that will take the whole summer to turn green. When you have grown accustomed to the taste, this "issuangnerk," as they call it, is really a very pleasant change from all the fresh meat.

Sorqaq, or, as his name would be in English, "The Whalebone," stood in the middle of the floor, and chopped up a whole side of walrus with an axe; when each had received a fair-sized piece, he sat down and the eating proceeded in silence. "Conversation and food, each for itself," as the Eskimo says. Only when the needs of the stomach had been satisfied did the tongues have their turn.

"Old Whalebone" was known as the finest bear-hunter in the tribe; but it was difficult to persuade him to tell stories of the chase.

"One must not talk about bear-hunting," he used to say; "if one's thoughts turn upon bears, then drive out and kill some. But sit inside and prate about them? no, leave that to old women; they are never backward when it is a case of chattering. But we men, we drive out one day with our dogs, and if we see a bear, it is not long before its meat is in our cooking-pot. I have nothing else to say!"

"Show us thy back, Sorqaq!" one of the young ones ventured to say.

"Thy speech is the speech of a boy," replied the old man loftily. "Hast thou ever seen a rugged ice-covered mountain? Thy back will certainly never look like that; no bear will ever deign to make a scar on thee!" And then he rose and chopped off fresh pieces of meat, which were distributed to the company.

Sorqaq was a passionate lover of dogs, and a very clever breeder. He had a special predilection for black animals. He had devoted great care to the breeding of them and had



managed to produce a very excellent hunting strain. When Sorqaq was in the vicinity of bears, no sledge could keep pace with his.

"I tell no bear stories," he said, when we had all finished our chewing in silence, "but I will tell you how I once revenged my dog."

And then he gave himself up unreservedly to the relation of his adventure.

"It was just at the season when the dark and the cold grow more intense with each dawn. The sun had disappeared and the ice had just covered the sea. It is a good bear-hunting time for the man with fleet dogs. The bears, with their half-grown cubs, are on the look-out for seals on the new ice.

"It was just at this season that I put my dogs one day to a bear's trail. The dark had already commenced to mount the sky. I followed the track till it vanished suddenly in a hollow wall of ice. I cut the traces, and all the dogs rushed baying into the cave. But the bear had squeezed itself into a corner, and was quite unapproachable; they could not get near him. I was thinking of calling them back when I heard my best dog howl. He was the lead-dog in my team, and nothing ever daunted him. A moment later he came out of the cave dragging the hinder part of his body after him, and before my eyes he fell down and died. The bear had hugged him.

"The bear who had killed my lead-dog should die!

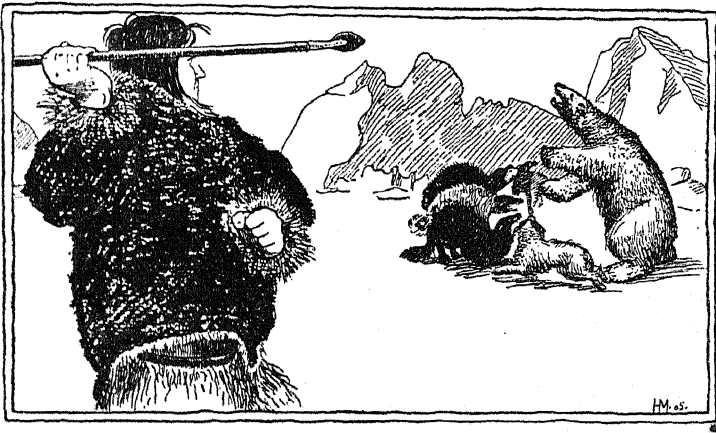
"I could not use my long lance inside the hole, and so I had to content myself with my knife; with it in my mouth I crawled inside. I could see nothing, but I could hear the growling of the bear, and that was enough. I felt my way along; when I sniffed his warm breath, I caught hold of something soft and drove the knife in with all my strength. Yah! something heavy fell on the top of me, and I fainted.

"When I became conscious again, my dead lead-dog was my first thought. The bear had gone, and so I groped my way out. Not far from the entrance the dogs had stopped the runaway.

"The bear was sitting on the ice, sneezing incessantly, and was waving his one paw at his pursuers in an oddly gentle manner. His head was bent, and the blood was gushing out of his nose; for see! straight through his snout was my hunting knife.

"When I saw it, I gave a great cry of glee, for I had revenged my dog, and then I ran my lance right through his heart.

"What did it matter after that, that my bleeding back froze



fast to my clothes as I drove home through the cold winter night?"

"Old Whalebone" was not only the greatest hunter, but likewise the largest eater in the tribe; but the sight of many people eating was an indispensable adjunct to his enjoyment. For that reason, one of his most striking characteristics was his love of inviting people to a meal. Had he lived under civilised conditions, I think he would have become the landlord of an inn, for he had the qualities of a host very highly developed, and had unfailing good spirits. If he had no meat left himself, he took some from others, and gave banquets with it; and no one ever ventured to protest, for he was as much feared for his sharp tongue as he was beloved for his light-hearted laughter.

When he had finished his story, he settled himself com-

fortably, face downwards, on the ground, and spoke a few caressing words to his wife. They would not be considered caressing in translation. It was not long before he was fast asleep, overcome by the heavy meal of walrus meat which he had just devoured.

And, when the host began to snore, the guests crept quietly away.

"The man who idles about the house when spring is here is wasting his life!" said Old Bone one morning that I met him.

"See! on the sunny side there is no more snow. Now you can bend down and drink from the ground, and you can lie and rest out on the rocks with the sun for a covering. This is when men start off on their travels. Wilt thou come too?"

Unfortunately I could not, but I promised to follow.

"The seals on the ice are too lazy to flee before the hunters. Come after us quickly; this is the time to secure meat to get high."

Then he called his dogs, harnessed them to his sledge, and bound his old rifle and his spears fast. "It has come to pass that a man starts on his travels!" he called abruptly in at the window: that is the Polar Eskimo's farewell. "Great Sorqaq is going!" echoed from within, and the people rushed to accompany him as far as the ice.

"Without a wife—old man's fashion!" one called jestingly after him.

"Quite right! Old men are always satisfied with the women they happen upon. And where men are gathered together, there is pretty well always a woman as well," retorted old Sorqaq, with a laugh. Then he swung his whip high over his head. The dogs sprang yapping across the ice and tore off in a playful galopade. Soon the sledge was out of sight.

Happy Sorqaq! Thou wast born with an energy that will never let thee rest. Thou must live travelling because



ESKIMOS SINGING SPIRIT-SONGS, TO THE ACCOMPANIMENT OF DRUMS



thou canst not stand always and every day to return to the same pen. The domestic animal nature has never formed part of thy composition.

The world is large, that men may take it in possession. And so, when the travelling fever comes over thee, then do thou fling thyself on thy sledge, lord of thy day, master of thy dogs!

It was not many days before I followed. A young man who had arrived from the north was anxious to have company on his return journey, so we decided to go together. The man's name was Piuaitsoq, which means "The Peaceable One"; and his name suited him, for he was always cheerful and always willing and helpful.

We broke camp in the evening, in brilliant sunlight, and drove off on good, smooth ice. It is usual at this time of the year to drive at night because the heat of the sun in the daytime makes the dogs heavy. We each had a team of eight dogs, and the two teams raced each other. Now we were side by side, going along at a rattling pace, the dogs trying to express their contempt for their opponents; now, again, each drove off in a different direction; then a whispered driving signal made the dogs suspect the vicinity of bears. A few deep-drawn breaths would make the whole team raise their heads, prick up their ears, and skim swiftly across the expanse of white, unending sheets of ice; a tense, long gasp would make them thrust their noses into the snow; but they saw nothing, and scented nothing, for the driver was a deceiver.

The team had been excited by these signals, which usually portend a fight, and were beginning to look doubtfully at their driver, sitting still and silent on his sledge; but let him lift his whip—not to strike, no, only to make the slender lash whistle above their heads—and you see them drop their tails, prick up their ears, and, with a wild yelp, the whole team rush forward, till the snow whirls about their legs in clouds—seeking, scenting the enemy.

Thus we sported with our dogs and smiled happily at each other, for well-trained dogs are the delight of every driver.

We had driven all night, and towards morning had come to a snow-covered glacier some 2500 feet high; this we had to cross. Just at the bottom we came upon a meat deposit at which, for the time being, we pulled up. We were hungry.

When Eskimos, travelling from one fishing-place to another, meet with a quarry, they generally store the greater part of the meat in a deposit, as it is often a matter of difficulty to transport it. These stores of meat are regarded as places of refreshment for any travellers, and there are always enough of them scattered along a day's driving distance, to render it unnecessary for any one to carry provisions for a journey, in the more frequented districts. The meat is stored under formidable piles of stones, to protect it from bears and foxes.

We unmassed the stones, cut off a large piece of walrus beef each, and had our meal.

The sun was already beginning to shine warm; the water was dripping down the sides of the snowfield, and running off in glistening icicles, which fringed every sheer descent. The plains down below us were bare of snow; the blades of grass lifted their timid length under the hot kiss of the sun. In front of the glacier, white bubbles of water floated away beneath a transparent crust of ice, and at the bend of the stream, where they met, you heard the ice crack. As we sat silent on the stones, chewing at our frozen walrus meat, our dogs lay with ears pricked; one of them got on his feet, and looked up to the top of the mountains.

"Do you think he can scent reindeer?" I asked Piuaitsoq.

He shook his head, and answered smilingly, with his mouth full—

"No, he is sniffing the earth, beginning to melt. The dog thinks it is winter still, and does not understand the smell of spring!"

A few snow buntings fly up to us and ensconce themselves under the jutting edge of the snow, to wash in the dripping water. But the great snowfield is groaning in the sunshine, and sighs so profoundly that a chasm breaks in it, furrowing the white forehead of it like a broad wrinkle.

We drive up through a deep gully, between the glacier and the mountain. A stream-bed makes the going easy and pleasant, except where, in places, large stones have forced their way through. About 600 feet aloft, we are able to drive on to the glacier, which rounds itself smoothly upwards like a shining marble back. The sun is scorching our faces, and the sun rays, which are flung back by the endless icefields, force us to close our eyes, so brilliant are they.

The dogs drag us up slowly, with dripping tongues hanging far out of their mouths.

The sun, the heat, and the frozen walrus flesh we have devoured, make us feel heavy and inert. We try to rouse ourselves by walking alongside the sledges, but perspiration drenches our clothes, and finally we both tumble back upon them and drop asleep.

I am awakened by my dogs stopping to look round and see what has become of me. I rub my eyes, and for a moment do not know where I am. Dazzled by the light, I see nothing but the sun; fire flashes in front of my eyes, and the whole of the cold glacier seems transformed into a white-hot mass. I am on the crest of the glacier, which unrolls itself monotonously as far as the eye can reach. But where is Piuitsoq? The ice-crust is hard and shows no traces. Where am I to begin looking for him?

There is nothing to be done but to let the dogs scent him out; so I mutter a little word between my teeth: "tyu, tyu, tyu!" The dogs forget the heat, and begin to sniff. And I know, when they spring forward at a gallop, that they have scented either Piuitsoq, or a reindeer crossing the glacier. It is not long before a sledge comes into sight ahead, and the sleeping Piuitsoq jumps up with a shout, as the two teams collide, barking.

Later in the afternoon we reached the camp where Sorqaq had put up. The tents lay under a steep, clean-cut mountain ridge, which from its shape bore the name of "The Curved Knife." It was notorious for its sudden squalls of wind when there were storms about. We were still some distance away



when everything that could creep or crawl inside the tents seemed to wake up. People shouted, and called out for sledges, and the dogs whined and yelped, not understanding what was going on. Sorqaq came leaping down over the edge of the ice with upturned sleeves and crimson arms. His face was glistening from a recent application of blubber.

"You bring joy!" he called out to us; "the long expected has arrived at last!"

He had just caught a seal, and was in the middle of flensing. On his fishing expedition he had joined his old friend, Qilerneq, and the two were now revelling together in all the delights of hunting and fishing. One must associate with "one's equals," he explained: Qilerneq, it appeared, was the oldest man in the tribe. They were staying in the house of a young woman named Alingnaluk, who was for the time being a lonely wife. Her husband, handsome Pualuna, had gone north to find her a companion wife.

When I drove up to the tents, an old, white-haired man tottered up to my sledge and called out his greeting: "sainak-sunai!" It was Qilerneq.

"They all like old man's catch best," said Sorqaq, "and you shall all eat fresh-caught seal to-day. Alingnaluk has the pot over the fire already."

"Old man never boasts of his age!" replied Qilerneq, laughing. "Thou talkest with the tongue of a youth. Thy hair is still black, Sorqaq."

"Thou art right, Qilerneq, my tongue is the tongue of a youth, but were my habits the habits of a young man, I should have shot the seal. Look you, I threw my gun away; for that manner of play is without strength. And then I crept right up to the animal, who thought I was a comrade, and I stabbed it. And my black hair thou only tauntest me with, because thou art envious that it is not faded like thine. He! he! he!"

Wherever Sorqaq was, all who wanted to laugh collected; and laughter followed upon his words now, as always.

"And thy dogs shall sleep heavily!" he went on. "Their full stomachs shall make them heavy to sleep, he, he!" And



ISIGAITSOQ (FOURTEEN TO FIFTEEN YEARS OLD)



then he vanished for a moment and reappeared with half of an exceedingly fat seal, which he threw down in front of them. "And I did not forget thee, either. See!" and he held out to me, all dripping with blood, the liver, which I was intended to eat. "A new arrival finds the time long while he is waiting for the pot to boil," he explained.

In the spring, there are no regular hours for sleep in an Eskimo camp; life goes on by day and night, if the weather be good. A large open fire, kept burning briskly, assembles the people round the open-air banqueting place, and the constant coming and going of men who are starting out, on fishing intent, and of those who are returning, keeps up life and interest round the fire all the time.

We sat round it, for fire and food, till far into the morning, and we were fortunate enough to taste of the fresh produce of the pot several times.

Old Sorqaq, in the course of the night, evoked a general expression of opinion that I ought to take a wife among the girls of the village.

"See, there is Isigaitsoq, and there is Amîmik," he urged. "Isigaitsoq has the longest hair, if you care for such vanities, and a perfectly new fox-skin robe. But you should understand that it is not the right thing for a man to travel all over the country, as you are doing, young and unmarried. You will get a bad reputation, and expose yourself to be made game of. Seest thou, a bachelor is a man who is rejected because he is a poor provider. For a woman is one of the things that a man should have. Here, a woman is the first thing he takes; after that come dogs, kayak, and last and most difficult of all, a gun. All this thou hast already. But who is to look after thy things, who will warm thy bed, and caress thee? Up here a young man always travels with a wife; sometimes, if necessary, with a borrowed one."

He proposed next that the following day all the sledges in the encampment should race to the bird rock at Kiatak; we were to go bird-catching; the sea-king<sup>1</sup> had arrived. You hide

<sup>1</sup> A name for the Little Auk.—G. H.

yourself in the stones, armed with a bird-net, and when the birds whizz past by the thousand over your head, you stretch out the net and draw them in, just as in Europe we catch butterflies, or, in the Faroe Islands, puffins. The sea-king is twice as large as a sparrow, and is caught in such large numbers that the supply lasts nearly all through the winter. "But," added Sorqaq, after his proposal, "the catching shall be done in couples, and," turning to me, "thou wilt take Isigaitsoq!"

Laughing, we turned into the tents, to get a little nap before the bird-catching expedition. I was the guest of Torngé. His wife was awaiting us with fresh reindeer meat, so more work lay before us before we could retire to rest; but, as the Eskimos say, soon our well-filled stomachs made us heavy to sleep.

The bird-catching did not come off. Later in the morning a north-west gale broke out, which put an end to the project. The tent in which we were sleeping was slit from top to bottom, and "The Curved Knife Hill" hurled its squalls so violently across the plain that you had to crawl along the ground, if you came out at all. So the Eskimos remained where they were for the whole of the twenty-four hours, to sleep the storm out. Late on in the evening I crept out and made my way through the snowdrift down to the tent where the two old friends were "lodging."

I was not in the least surprised to learn that they had left their warm bear-skins long ago and gone out in the wind. After looking for them for some time I found them in a dilapidated stone hut which was usually occupied by the dogs. They had made a huge open fire inside and were sitting round it, jabbering away and boiling seal-meat. Their faces were black with smoke and soot.

"Hi, come here!" bawled up Sorqaq through a hole in the roof, catching sight of me. "People are so foolish! Snowstorms and sleep make them forget the needs of the stomach. And, as it did not look as though they would ever get up again, we are sitting here cooking for them all," they explained, as I climbed down.

The delight of the two old men in each other's company was



SORQAQ



quite touching ; they were devoted to each other, and their friendship dated back from their boyhood. True, there were those who maintained that Qilerneq and no other had, by his magic, bewitched Sorqaq's most goodly son, Tâterâq, and made him a cripple for life ; and that could hardly be called a friendly act, they thought. Then again, that Sorqaq was afraid of his superior in witchcraft and age ; but malicious tongues are to be found everywhere. And a fact it was that "Whalebone" and Qilerneq, which, interpreted, is "The Knot," were always seen happy together.

"The Knot" having found it a difficulty to chew seal-meat, "Whalebone" had hit upon the expedient of frying a few dainty slices for him in blubber, on a hollow stone. And he was sitting devouring this when I joined them. Sorqaq had taken his old gun to pieces and was engaged in giving it a very creditable cleaning. When he had finished, he made arrangements for a grand target-shooting practice. The shoulder-blade of a walrus was set up against an ice-covered cliff, and every shot he fired he sent a boy down to cut out the ball. In the meantime the old man would sit hugging himself with delight at being able to score one bull's eye after another without using up any of his treasured ammunition.

"One must be economical!" explained Sorqaq, and laughed. "I learnt that once when I was driven out to sea by a westward gale. I was far from land when the ice split up and began to drift out. The floes crashed against each other, and were ground up smaller and smaller ; at last I was obliged to climb with my dogs on an iceberg, and there play ship's captain for five days. But I had only one small seal to live upon, I and my eight dogs. Seest thou ! it was then that I learnt economy ; for there was no knowing when I should cast anchor in a harbour. On the fifth day I was driven to landward by a south-west wind. But when people saw me come drifting in on the top of an iceberg, they very nearly ran away ; they thought I was a sea-monster. Sorqaq, of course they thought, had been seal-catching in the hunting-grounds of the dead long enough—heh ! heh ! Yes, death follows men about, dogs men's foot-



steps, and is never farther away from life than his shadow from a man!"

Sorqaq was soon to prove the truth of this last remark. One day that autumn was very nearly his last.

He had gone to a bird rock, auk-shooting, and of course he could not pick up the razorbills from below like other mortals, but must needs go a thousand feet aloft. There he had bound a leather thong about his body, and had hopped about among the shelves of rock. At last, however, he forgot the thong for once, and sprang too far. The line ran out before he had secured a foot-hold; for a moment he hung dangling over the precipice, then the line broke, and Sorqaq fell. Some kayak-men found him lying unconscious on a little reef. He had fallen during the ebb tide, and the rising flood had already reached his body. His shoulder was broken, and he had a bad wound in his head. He was towed home like a dead seal, and laid on a bear-skin, that he might die in peace; and his wife began to mourn the loss of the breadwinner.

But he cheated death that time too. Later in the winter he was once more one of the first sledge-drivers.

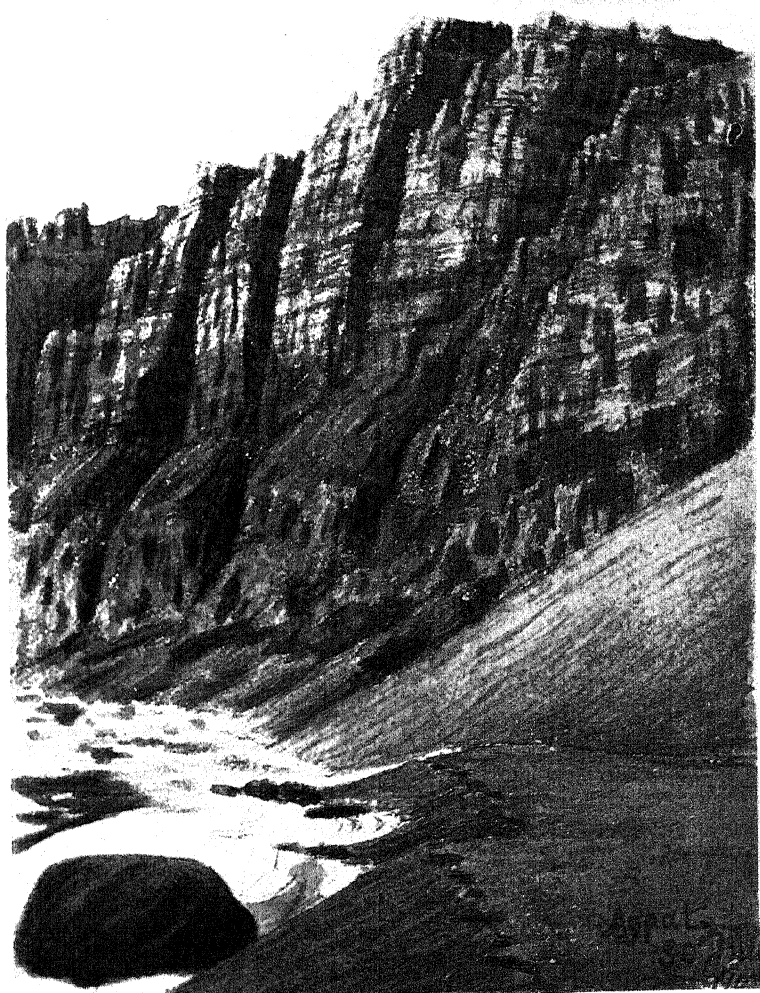
"Death shows favour!" said Sorqaq, the first day I met him out after his fall.

Marvellous Sorqaq!

When I came to leave your land, to return to civilisation, you stroked your hand over my breast at parting and said to me: "I am an old man. But all within me with forces that grow old, is strong yet; and now I stroke thee over the breast to make thee strong for a long life!"

And in the crowd of the many people that I have met and known I have not forgotten you.

And I raise this memorial to the old bear-hunter.





## THE ORPHAN

"Who is he?" I asked an old woman, the first time I saw Kajoranguaq. He was worse dressed than any of the others, but his eyes rivalled the blubber of the lamps in their brilliance.

"Oh, a poor little orphan fellow, who eats by the cooking-pots," she replied, flinging a bone to him. The boy seized it eagerly, and set upon it with his teeth; but the meat was tough.

I had a rusty little child's knife from South Greenland in my pocket, and I presented him with it, to inaugurate our acquaintance. A gift always opens the door of an Eskimo heart.

It was assuredly the first time in his life that the orphan had ever had such an experience as to receive a present. He looked me up and down and shook his head. I assured him that I really meant it. Then, without a change of expression, he snatched the knife out of my hand and ran off. I did not think that I should see any more of him for the present, and was just going into our tent, when he came running up with a piece of walrus meat, which he pressed into my hand.

"Thou gavest, see: I give too," said he, and his face shone with grease and pride. Of course he had stolen the walrus meat. But from that day forth we were friends.

Kajoranguaq had no relatives at all to look after him. And it was really rather extraordinary that he had not been put out of the way long ago. But he was everybody's drudge, and so he was suffered to live. He had had shelter for the night during the winter with an old magician, Sagdloq, but towards the spring the latter's wife had fallen ill, and so the orphan boy was turned out.

During some of the snowstorms that raged shortly after he

was homeless he had had difficulty in keeping himself alive, until he discovered an old ruined building which had been altered into a shelter for a puppy. There, he said, he was very comfortable.

But one day, when the gale was at its worst, he came into our tent with a gaping wound in his forehead; a piece of his house had fallen in upon him as he slept. But Kajoranguaq did not care, and was quite content to let the puppy keep the wound clean by licking it.

His rags were drenched by the snowstorm, but he was not



cold. We invited him to stay inside with us for a little, and let the snow thaw off him, and in the meantime Harald Moltke made a picture of him.

"Nah, that cannot be I, refuse of men?" he said, laughing, when he saw his portrait.

He could not have been more than ten years old at the outside, but he manifested already, like a true scion of Eskimos, the passions of his race, loving, beyond all else, the drum-songs of his fathers. And he was always singing when he was alone.

One day, while I was paying a visit to a neighbour, Kajoranguaq came in too. As usual, he was drenched, and covered with snow. His hosts took pity on him, and undressed him, to dry his clothes. But the people broke into astonishment



KAJORANGUAQ, DRESSED IN THE CAST-OFF UNDERCLOTHING  
OF THE "EXPEDITION"



when he stood before them with his maltreated body literally "clothed" in dirt. But the little fellow cared not a jot, and every time a remark was let fall, grabbed at his hair and ate one of the small beings that he nourished with his blood. These were the greatest delicacy he knew.

They let him crawl up on the sleeping-place and lie down among the reindeer skins, and soon he was fast asleep and far away.

The day Mikissoq, his foster-mother, died, I saw him up on the plain behind the tents. He was singing drum-songs with a vigour and a delight that surpassed even his wont, and his little face beamed. He beat time to his singing on a little tin box, and all his movements were exuberant: his foster-mother was dead, and it was her illness that had made him homeless.

Kajoranguaq was a little man of the world, with feelings hardened by neglect, and all sentimental notions were quite foreign to him.



# W O M E N

## A REVOLT

ERÈ was not a notable sportsman ; it was said of him that he rowed a kayak covered with the skins of another's catch ; and that was not befitting a man !

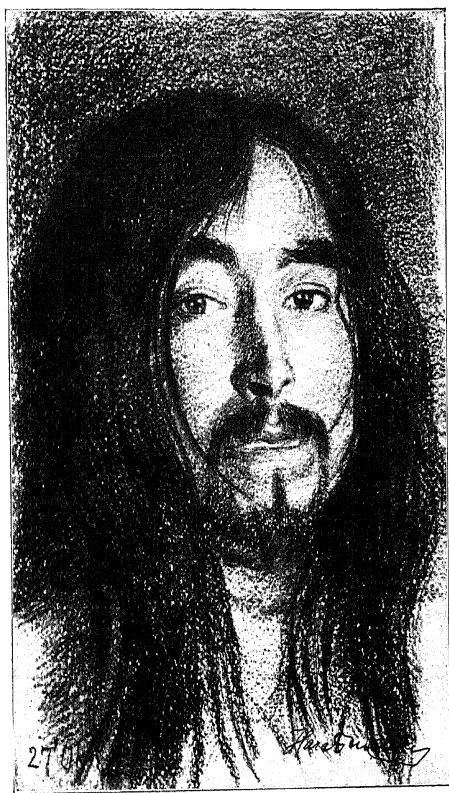
He was young and strong, but idle ; and in addition to that, married to an elderly and stout widow. They slept together in a corner of his father's house, and it was rarely that they managed to be awake at the hour when fishermen start out to sea. Then they would hang about all day in idleness, until it was evening again.

The boys of the village had bestowed upon him the ironic nickname of " the strong man " ; when Erè heard it, he usually struck whomsoever was nearest to him.

Apart from this, he was generally in excellent humour. He was the son of the great Sorqaq, and the brother of the best seal-catcher in the village, Majaq ; why should he over-exert himself ? In any case there would be food enough for the winter.

But if by any chance he did go out seal-catching, he nearly always had meat with him on his return ; but it was from the division, be it observed, of the other men's catch ; for he had a remarkable faculty for turning up where any game had been secured.

Once, though, he had an unlucky adventure. He was out after walrus, with some of the others, late in the autumn, when snow had already fallen inland. The seal-hunters had got hold of a large walrus, and were just trying to kill it with their harpoons. Erè got too near, and the animal hurled itself at him. His kayak capsized immediately, and, as he disappeared below the surface, the walrus betook itself off. His companions hauled



ERÈ (AGED ABOUT THIRTY)



him out of the water and laid him across their kayaks, which they had bound together, raft fashion, in a fleet. They took him along thus till they came to an ice-floe, when they stripped off his wet clothes and lent him such of their own as they could do without. When Erè was finally brought ashore, he was more dead than alive.

But, as I have said, it was exceedingly seldom that he exposed himself to danger or inconvenience.

It was this man whom Aleqasina, the widow, had taken. She had four children by her former marriage, and it was no



such easy matter to find them a protector; she would have to be careful in her choice. And so, when Erè had come to her one night, she had kept him. They were very fond of each other; they could nearly always be seen in their own corner of Sorqag's house with their arms round each other, or in some affectionate attitude. They laughed and gambolled like a pair of wanton children, and were the most frequent of our visitors. But then, they had the most time.

There was an animal lack of restraint about their intercourse and affection which at times vented itself in the most savage outbreaks. The Eskimos are much like animals. The men love their wives; but when the fancy takes them, when they are satiated with love, they maltreat them in a manner

that we civilised men would consider brutal. But, say the Eskimos, if affection is to be kept alive, the woman must feel occasionally that the man is strong.

I was sitting in our tent one day with a few guests, when an angry shout broke the silence in the village. The voice was a man's.

"My knife!" he shouted. "Thou hast forgotten to sharpen my knife!" We peeped through the hangings of the tent and saw young Erè, red and excited, dragging his fat wife after him; he had seized her by the hair and was pulling her towards the plain at the back of the tents. Aleqasina was white with rage and pain, but trudged along after him without opening her lips.

One of the guests in our tent was the brother of the ill-used Aleqasina, handsome Sitdluk. When I saw Erè, laughing scornfully, drag his suffering victim past our tent, a hot, civilised anger had been roused within me at this ill-treatment of "a weak woman"; an inherited impression that I, in my capacity as man, must come forward as the champion of the unfortunate one, made my cheeks burn, and in fancy I already saw, with glee, the cruel husband biting the dust. Then I looked at her brother, thinking to recognise in him the same pleasant indignation, which should vent itself in a gay little battle. Our eyes met,—but Sitdluk was laughing, laughing till his hair fell down over his face. He had guessed my thoughts.

"Let them make up their own differences," he said; "up here people never mix themselves up in quarrels between a man and his wife."

"Yes; but she is your sister!" I replied.

But Sitdluk only roared.

"My sister is a woman, like all the rest of them, I suppose; and women must be punished occasionally, to make them obedient. You can hear for yourself that Aleqasina refused to sharpen her husband's knife."

Strangely ashamed, I relinquished my warrior's attitude, feeling that it were better to hide my knightly indignation until

I was once more among my fellow-countrymen, who could digest it. And, dear me—a quarrel between affectionate Eskimos was quite as interesting an experience as the conjurations of a magician! And I had come up here, first and foremost, for the impartial study of life under other conditions than those to which I was accustomed.

I soon perceived that imported ideas of right and wrong had very nearly betrayed me into an altogether unjustifiable interference in a private difference between two people. And the following is an absolutely historic account of the little human drama that was played out before me, with only such omissions as common decency demands.

“It is well that thou hast refused to obey!” cried Erè; “for a long time thou hast wanted to feel who is master!”

As soon as they were out on the level, he gave her a blow that threw her off her feet.

“Kill me! Oh no! you dare not! Oh no! you are too great a coward! You dare not, because of my relations!” taunted Aleqasina.

But Erè placed his foot exultingly on her body, and laughed, well satisfied at her powerlessness.

“Refuse to obey another time and you will know how I take disobedience.”

He said it quite quietly, almost caressingly, to annoy her; and then he began moving his foot backwards and forwards across her body. I shuddered when I saw him; for I knew that Aleqasina was soon to be a mother.

“Yes, tread on me! Kill your child!” she screamed, laughing wildly, as he hastily withdrew his foot. “You are crimson with anger, and yet you dare not hurt me! You are afraid!” she taunted him again.

Then the man lost control of himself and rushed at her, striking her across the face.

Aleqasina did not utter a sound, but she got up and walked towards the rocks. The man stood looking after her.

“Where are you going to?” he called out, anger having made him short of breath.

Aleqasina turned round and said quietly—

“Find another wife to ill-treat. I am not coming back.”

“Ah! then you have not had enough yet,” replied Erè, and ran after her again, seizing her by the hair, and dragging her backwards towards the tents.

“Women’s whims! It is quite amusing to cure them of them!” he said, as the woman still kept silence. And, convinced that she was cowed, he was on the point of letting fly his manly rage, when, like a flash, she sprang at him and struck him such a violent blow in the side with her two fists, that he fell down with a howl.

When anything special is going on, there are always a number of invisible spectators, who steal up quietly, that they may be able to report the event afterwards; but they prefer to be out of sight.

Just in this way, when Erè had been knocked down by his wife, ever so many jumped out from the tents, giggling, and one half-grown boy even had the impertinence to call out, “The strong man has been knocked down by a woman!” Poor Aleqasina! She paid dearly for her victory. She was flung savagely to the ground, and, when she rose again, blood was pouring from her nose.

Suddenly she seized a large stone, and threw it, with great force, in the direction of the tents. The stone hit one of Erè’s dogs, which crawled under a sledge, yelping.

“What are you stoning my dogs for?” cried the man.

“What do I care about your dogs? The stone missed, but it was intended for you!” she replied.

Fresh access of fury! Aleqasina thrown down and ill-treated again.

Despite all the pain, the woman preserved her imperturbable calm, and did not utter a word of complaint.

And Erè, who by this time had quite lost his balance, began, without any reason whatever, to stone all his dogs, and made them tear about the place, whining and barking.

Then he seized the precious knife, which had been the innocent cause of the whole uproar, broke it across his knee,

and flung it into the sea. This relieved his mind sufficiently to allow him to enter the tent, and leave his wife unmolested further. She followed him slowly.

An hour later, the couple could be heard laughing confidentially, as though nothing had occurred between them; and somewhat later, when I peeped in at them, they were lying affectionately asleep, with their arms round each other.

By night the tale was all over the village. Every spectator had something to say on the matter; and, if there was some divergence in the accounts of the various details, all were agreed as to the result of the event.

"Fancy!" they said, giggling; "Erè was thrown by his wife—pfui!—by a woman!"

When anything unusual had happened, and you wished to hear of the matter from various points of view, you had only to go down to Tâterâq (the Kittiwake). He was the animated newspaper of the place, but, in contrast to the usual run of newspapers, he included every shade of opinion in his reports, inasmuch as he always salted his accounts with: "He said . . . but such another thought that . . . and then so and so said . . ."; in this wise, it is also true, he avoided saying what he thought himself, which was prudent of him.

Tâterâq was a palsied man, who lay out on his sledge, day and night, all through the summer; nothing that happened as far as his eyes could reach escaped his vigilance, and when he called out, as he occasionally did, you were quite certain to see the whole place bestir itself; everybody knew that the helpless man on the sledge had nothing to do but wait for something to happen.

And should there be a paucity of happenings now and again, he would take refuge in his dreams, which often augured remarkable things; and in this way he succeeded in keeping the interest of the public in himself alive.

I was very much impressed by what had just happened, when I went down to him. And, as I was very anxious to get him to say what he thought on the matter, I informed



him that it was the first time in my life that I had ever seen a woman struck.

Tâterâq opened his eyes wide and stared at me; he was convinced that I was making fun of him. But when he had heard me repeat my assertion, there was sympathy in his voice as he replied—

“Well, then, how do you manage to keep your women in order? Or is it perhaps they who are the masters in your country?”

Thereupon we exchanged our views on the subject, to find that they did not quite coincide. He spoke with great dignity; still, there was some trace of bitterness in his remarks.

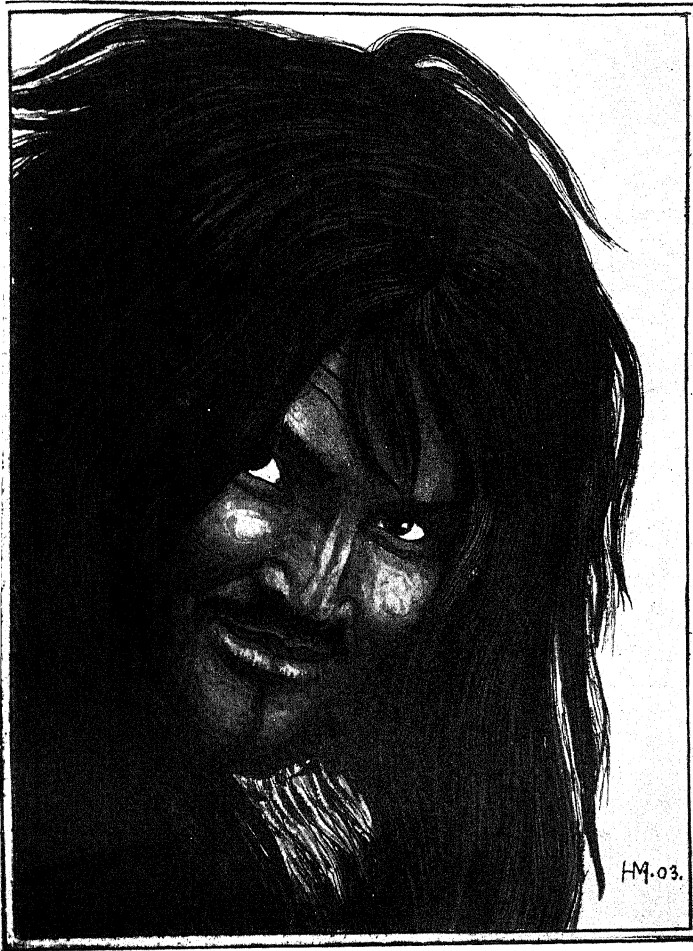
“Women have to be provided for,” he explained, “and it is we who have to do the providing. They cling to us because we give them food and clothing. See! when I was well and strong, and caught seals in abundance, I had a wife who was very fond of me. And then the Evil Fate laid its grip upon me, and my body died. Then I had to be content to eat what others caught, and see! my wife ran away, and let herself be taken by one who could feed her better—ha! that is what they are like,—but if we are to be the providers, then we must be the masters too. And if the woman gets fancies into her head, then she must be beaten; that will bring her to her senses again.

“Women can be a nuisance, when you have not got them under control. And if you punish them, you must know, too, where to draw the line. Mistakes on either side the line can be unfortunate.”

And, to show me that his opinions were based on “the wisdom of his forefathers,” he told me the following story, which had become a legend.

### THE WOMAN WHO TOLD A LIE

They relate that Navaranapaluk was descended from cannibals. When she was grown up, she was given in marriage to some who did not eat men.



TÄTERÄQ



One day that she was going to pay a visit to her relations, she drew a pair of mittens over her feet instead of boots. She did this so that her people might believe her new compatriots treated her badly.

It was the middle of winter, and her relations were exceedingly sorry for her, when they saw her arrive on foot; and so they agreed to attack the tribe that she now belonged to.

They set off, and arrived at the village at a time when all the men were away; there were only women at home, so they fell upon them and murdered them; only three escaped.

One of them had thrown over herself the skin that she was just dressing; the second had turned a dog's-meat trough over herself; and the third had hidden in a shed where meat was stored.

When the men came home they found all their women killed, and their suspicions were aroused when they found that Navaranapaluk was missing.

And great was their anger, for the assassins had impaled the women on long stakes, so that the stakes pierced their bodies.

At once they prepared to attack their enemies, and began to make large numbers of arrows.

The three women who were left, plaited the sinew-thread with which the heads of the arrows were to be fastened on; and they plaited with such ardour that there was no flesh left on their finger-tips, and the bones projected. One of them died from loss of blood.

When they were well equipped, they set off, and hid behind large stones, above the houses of their enemies.

The assassins, after their return home, had expected the avengers every day; so their women took turns to watch.

It is said that one old woman had a remarkable dream. She dreamt that two lice were fighting on her head. And when she told it to the others, they all thought that the avengers must be in the neighbourhood. So they all gathered together in one house to ask counsel of the spirits. And when the incantation was well under way, a dog on the roof suddenly began to bark.

The men rushed out, but by then their enemies had surrounded the house, and they accomplished their vengeance by shooting all the men down with arrows. It was only when there were none left that they chose wives from among the widows, and took them home.

But two of them seized Navaranapaluk by the hand and ran off with her.

And she, who thought they were competitors for her hand, called out—

“Which of you! which of you!”

But the men only laughed, without replying, and ran on with her.

Then suddenly they cut off both her arms with a knife.

The blood streamed from the stumps, and Navaranapaluk ran on a little way; and then she looked as if she had arms of blood.

But soon she fell, and died from loss of blood.

They treated her thus because she was a liar.

I heard the story from those who arrived from the other side of the sea.

Thus far Tâterâq and his forefathers.

A superficial consideration of the position of woman in Eskimo society might induce one mistakenly to believe that she leads exclusively a cowed and unhappy existence. If you refer to the legends, which record the experiences of many generations, you find that no small number of them begin with relating how “once there was a woman, who—as is you know customary—was very badly treated by her husband, and so one day she ran away to the hills.” And, living amongst them, you see for yourself that cruel blows are not infrequent. But certainly no one would be more astonished than she herself, if any one came to the Eskimo woman and pitied her; for her body is strong and healthy, her heart light, and her mind well-balanced; and so life seems to her worth living, and admirably and sensibly arranged. She herself has no consciousness whatever of being man’s drudge.



*Isigaitok.*  
*Umánik 7 Jan. 1904*

AN ESKIMO BELLE



In our estimate of these conditions, we must, in order to understand her, regard the matter strictly from the Eskimo point of view, and not impute to her the feeling of honour and craving for independence of the civilised woman. She grows up in the knowledge that she will one day be an incidental man's property. Perhaps she will cry, the day that she is made a wife; but she does so because she is still so young, and would rather be ranked among the playing children than among the staid matrons. Girls are generally about sixteen when they are married. Among the Polar Eskimos there are more men than women, and the young seal-catcher, therefore, must make haste if he wishes to secure the most essential item of his equipment. How else will he get the skins of the animals he hunts, dressed, and who would make and care for his clothes? And warm, well-made clothes are a necessity for a successful provider in those regions. And, too, she will give him children, whom he may expect to fill his manly heart with paternal happiness, and secure his old age from want.

Women mean all this. That they are indispensable to the maintenance of the social fabric they know quite well; and they are proud of it.

Nor is a wife merely "a thing you take." Grave responsibilities accompany marriage: if the woman has old parents who can no longer look after themselves, the man must undertake the charge of them; and if he marries a widow, he must feed and clothe her children.

In ordinary life, moreover, one does not see much of man's vaunted power over life and limb. Women have a way of their own of getting what they want, both in small things and great. And if you want a man to do anything for you, it is always well first to win his wife over to your cause.

The domestic life of the Eskimos flies past in a succession of happy days. If you stop to listen outside a hut, you will always hear cheerful talking and laughter from within.

We are so quick to judge the men, because they strike; and we are sorry for the women, who get a black eye now and again as the result of a little temper. But we forget that



we civilised men, by a poisoned word, can often strike harder and more brutally than the Eskimo with his fist.

There is only one thing in which the woman is not allowed any voice whatever, and that is in sexual matters. She is the absolute property of man, who, by the customs of his society, may lend her away for a night, or longer, without in the least taking her wishes into consideration.

It is generally on hunting expeditions that the men agree to exchange wives for a night, but to the woman herself they say nothing at all about it on their return home; it is only when the woman sees a strange man lie down on her couch, and her own husband go to another house, that she understands the exchange. Women are never exchanged out of the house for a night. It is the men who change couches.

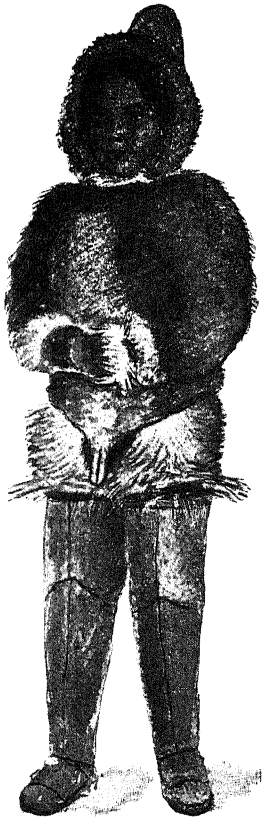
This wife-changing can sometimes play quite a useful part. Thus, if a man has to go away on a long hunting expedition, and he wants a woman with him, he can, if his own wife, for instance on account of pregnancy, is unfitted to endure the hardships of an expedition by sledge, lend her to a man who is remaining, and in return receive his.

But it may likewise happen that a young wife is homesick for friends and family who live a long way off; if her husband is willing to humour her, but does not himself wish to undertake the journey, a man fond of travelling will often announce himself as agreeable to take the other on her visit, leaving his own wife as hostage.

Finally, wife-changing can always be applied as a means of correction with over-capricious women. When a marriage becomes "disturbed," the man often exchanges his wife for an indefinite period. It is asserted that the two are soon anxious to be together again; for a man generally discovers that his own wife is in spite of all the best.

Children who are born during an exchange remain with the mother until they no longer require her care.

It sometimes happens that a woman will refuse, with tears, to be exchanged, but that is rare. Then the husband beats her as a punishment.



ARNARUNIAQ, WIFE OF ALATTÂQ



These conditions sometimes give rise to curious ethical ideas among the Eskimos. A man once told me that he only beat his wife when she would not receive other men. She would have nothing to do with any one but him—and that was her only failing!

Polygamy occurs, but it is rare, as there are too few women.

In a man's choice of a wife the feelings are not taken into account; considerations of convenience and common sense alone carry weight. Affection comes as the result of living together.

On the whole, I have retained the pleasantest impression of the mutual relations between man and woman. If we can take their own social and moral ideas as the basis of our judgment, it must be conceded in their favour that their life is happier and more free from care than that of civilised people in general. Life has no bitter disappointments in store for them, because they are not brought up to believe in theories which in practical life collapse.

There is only one woman whom I pity among the Polar Eskimos—the woman who has no children.

## BARREN

Sâmik, or "The Left-handed," was the richest man in his tribe.

He was the owner of three Winchester rifles, a double-barrelled fowling-piece, a tool chest with a saw, plane, file, axe and knives, a whaler's sloop, and a little yawl. He had accompanied Robert Peary on his Polar expeditions, and his riches were the reward of the great services he had rendered his white master.

But in addition to all his precious treasures, he likewise owned all that the Eskimos usually possess, sledges, dogs, a tent and kayaks.

All travellers who arrived at his village were invited by

him to great banquets of Polar bear meat, of walrus or reindeer; and there was always enough and to spare for every one who entered his house.

It was said of him that his flesh-pits saw two suns rising without emptying, for neither men nor dogs could eat in one winter what he was able to bring down in the hunting season.

But despite all his riches, "The Left-handed" was not a happy man: he was childless.

Once, it is true, he had had a son, but his wife had died soon after it was born. The little one had lived a few days, but, as there was no one to be found who could give it milk, it had quickly faded away. Sâmik could not bear to see his son suffer, and one day, as he lay there whimpering, he had picked him up in his arms and strangled him, out of compassion.

It was not long before he took another wife, and of course she was the best "parti" in the tribe. The young and beautiful Eqariussaq was a much-travelled lady; she had been with Peary in America.

"The Left-handed" was now joyful and happy with his new wife—until he discovered that she could give him no child.

Beautiful Eqariussaq was barren. From the day that that dawned upon him, Sâmik conceived an extreme contempt for his young wife, and life between them was no good thing.

As Sâmik simultaneously fell in love with the sixteen-year-old Arnaruniaq, who was the wife of Alattaq, the magician, he grew more and more unkind to Eqariussaq, whom he often beat in savage fits of passion. But Eqariussaq suffered him to ill-treat her and did not run away, because, in spite of everything, she would not hear of any other husband than Sâmik. One fine day, however, she was obliged to leave her husband's house. Sâmik exchanged her for an indefinite period to Alattaq, who, as a compensation, received the loan of one of his rifles.

It was said among the people that Alattaq, who had the reputation of being a great magician, would exercise his magic

over Eqariussaq, so that she would be able to give her husband children.

Alattaq was good to her: he was a huge, peaceful giant, who would not have hurt anybody. But Eqariussaq ran away from him and went back to her husband nearly every day, imploring him to let her return home. Sâmik, however, was deaf to her appeals.

Towards the end of the dark season, shortly before our departure southward, I paid a visit to the village where Sâmik lived.

As usual, he immediately invited the new arrivals to meat,



together with the inhabitants of the village. Arnaruniaq was hostess. Later on in the evening all the men and women collected for drum-songs, and duets were sung till far into the night.

When at last, gleeful and in festive mood, we groped our way out through the entrance to go to our house and sleep, I heard sobbing behind the houses, and followed the sound. Out in the snow sat Eqariussaq, crying. I tried to talk to her, but she only shook her head, without replying.

Next day every one knew that Sâmik, when she came into his house in the evening, had picked up his axe and thrown it at her. It had hit her and broken one of the bones in her foot.

“Fool!” people said, “not to be able to keep away from him!”

Poor, barren woman! She lay for weeks suffering frightful pain in her crushed foot.

But when the day came that she was able to get up again and walk, she will only have crawled back to the man who was ready to beat her and injure her.

## A SUMMER JOURNEY

OUR sick comrade, Count Harald Moltke, was by this time so far on the road to recovery that he could take a walk every day on the big flat outside our tent on Saunders Island. But in spite of the steady progress he was making, we dared not expose him to another winter in this harsh climate and under these primitive conditions, if we could possibly avoid it.

Two Scottish captains, whom we had met on June 27, would not undertake the responsibility of transporting him by vessel, but they had told us that not far behind them was another whaler, the *Vega*, which would be able to lend us a boat; they themselves could not spare one. If Moltke's health continued to improve, towards the autumn, when the channels were clear of ice, we might make an attempt to penetrate, along the Melville Glaciers, to Upernivik. We waited for the *Vega*, and went up the hills, on the look-out, whenever it was clear. But the waiting-time grew long. The *Vega* did not come. As is well known, she was packed in the ice in Melville Bay and lost.

By the middle of July we came to the conclusion that we must seek some other way out of our difficulties, if we wanted to reach Upernivik before the winter. . And as an Eskimo, named Sâmik, in the Northern District, possessed a whaling sloop that he had received from Robert Peary, the American, we decided to place ourselves in communication with him and try to induce him to lend us his boat, which could be returned to him later by a whaler from Upernivik.

The time of year was not a favourable one for the journey. Ice still lay over the fjord, and made kayak travelling impossible. The attempt would have to be made with dog-sledges. It was decided, therefore, that Mylius-Erichsen and the Green-



lander Gabriel should remain behind with Harald Moltke, while I, with the Greenlandic Catechist Jörgen Brönlund, was to drive north and open negotiations with Sâmik. In addition to Jörgen, I chose, as escorts, two young Eskimos of about twenty years of age, Sitdluk and Qisunguaq.

So two sledges left our encampment in Saunders Island on July 17 at midnight and proceeded north. All the ice on the south side of the island had disappeared, but on the north coast there was still a narrow bridge of ice connecting it with the mainland: we should be able to cross by that. But first we had to get our sledges over the high land, 2000 feet in height and bare of snow, and that was no easy matter, as our way up and down led through ravines where the streams had long since burst their ice covering and rushed down with great force. Foreseeing what the difficulties of our journey would be, we had limited our baggage to our sleeping-bags and a little clothing, all the provisions we had being a handful of biscuits and a little tea and sugar; we should fall in with food enough on the way.

"Men don't drag meat with them in the height of summer!" as the Eskimos said. Nor did we take a tent with us. We owned two, but one had to be left for Moltke; the other had been torn by the dogs, and was consequently unusable in wet weather. We should have to manage Eskimo fashion; if it rained we must seek shelter among the rocks.

Along wretched, half-melted ice, intersected by streams, and after a twelve hours' journey, we reached the mainland, where we had to camp, as the heat was too much for the dogs. Towards midnight we went on, at first on ice. We passed a few small islands, where we collected eider-ducks', terns' and long-tailed ducks' eggs. The first ice came to an end at the islands, and we went on for a little way on floating ice-floes, but at last we were compelled to fall back on the land, though bare of snow. The inland streams gave us a great deal of trouble. We were obliged to pull the sledges ourselves, bare-legged, when we wanted to cross them, and, being glacier streams, they were icily cold; our flaming scarlet legs tingled with the freezing water.



JÖRGEN BRÖNLUND



We then came to the great bay, Iterdlagssuaq, across the mouth of which it was easy going ; but farther inland the ice was cut up by the current and covered with water, which often reached above the cross-bars of our sledges. Towards mid-day we succeeded in making the opposite coast of the bay, without a dry thread upon us. There we encamped, by a little stream-bed.

*July 18.*—Towards evening we were awakened by pouring rain and obliged to seek shelter in a cave near by. Here we were protected from the south-west gale and the driving sleet. We remained thirty-six hours in the cave.

*July 20.*—Towards morning it cleared up ; we sprang half-naked about the rocks, and dried our clothes and sleeping-bags. We made a little tea, and boiled some seal's skin—starvation fare. During the storm the dogs broke in and ate our meat. We set out again towards evening. Towards camping time, shot three seals ; men and dogs ate what they could. Sweet sleep followed.

*July 21.*—Rain and storm again ; we are sadly wet.

*July 22.*—Good drying weather. We went on. The ice unfortunately broken up ; we had to drive on floes, the ice-foot and on land. At the head of the fjord we made a halt to reconnoitre ; from there we had to travel along the glacier. Jörgen, who had gone on in front, saw a reindeer, which he shot. While we were engaged in skinning and cutting up, the rain came on again. At the same time, a storm rose amongst the rocks and glaciers, so violent that it swept sand and stones down with it. We hastily erected a little shelter, constructed of our sledges, covered with blubber, and the freshly flayed seal-skins, and crawled inside.

For the third time we are weather-bound, even before we have our clothes dried from the last wetting.

*July 23.*—Rain and wind. We sit under an uninviting dripping of blubber. When we are tired of telling tales—and by degrees we have worked through the whole of our childhood and our taste of manhood—we lie down to sleep, or Jörgen begins to read aloud to us from his Bible. I read the Revela-

tion of St. John, which impresses me greatly in its imposing Greenlandic translation. Jörgen clings to St. Paul, and reads me the Epistle to the Romans. Now and again an illusion of comfort visits us, and as we grow absorbed in each other's narrations we manage to forget that we are wet and hungry. It is only when silence has fallen upon us all again that we notice how we are slowly being pickled in the wet. The sleeping-bags are drenched, the reindeer hair on them is beginning to fall off in patches, and our clothes are smelling musty. Our feet are white and swollen from the damp, and we are cold.

Our spirits are on the verge of a breakdown, and we are beginning to talk of our comrades at Agpat, who, on the thorns of expectation, probably think that we have already reached our goal.

When shall we be able to go on? Will it be possible to get through at all? Or is this expedition, which was started upon in such high hopes, to end merely in disappointment—disappointment for us, and for those behind who are waiting?

"Talk, Knud, talk! There will be no standing it, if we are both silent. Tell us something, no matter what!" And Jörgen rolls me over in my sleeping-bag. Sitdluk thrusts his head out and shouts hopelessly into the roaring gale, "qanigtailivdlugo! qanigtailivdlugo!" which in translation means, "Stop the rain! stop the rain!" For he believes that up among the rocks there live powerful spirits who can command the wind and stop the downpours of rain.

And Qisunguaq begins to reproach me with avarice. "You are so strange, you white men! You collect things you will never require, and you cannot leave even the graves alone. All this calamity is the revenge of the dead. Perhaps we shall die of hunger. Just because you took those stupid things!"

A few days before I had taken a scratching-pin, a needle-case and a curved knife from an old grave. I console him by saying that the corpse would certainly have been satisfied with my exchange gifts to the soul. It had had tea, matches, blubber and meat, just as they had stipulated. But Qisunguaq would not be appeased.

"The thoughts of the dead are not as our thoughts; the dead are incomprehensible in their doings!" he sighed.

"Stop, stop the rain!" calls Sitdluk despairingly up to the rocks.

"Tell us about Marianne, or Ellen, or Sara. Tell tales, and do not stop till we have forgotten where we are and think we are with them," demands Jørgen.

And memory hypnotises us back to experiences that lie behind; and fancy draws us ever in the same direction—back to vanished well-being, when we knew no privations; back to the delicacies of the Danish-Greenlandic kitchen, to the magnificent splendour of the shops. And thus, when one of us gets well under way with his narrative, we succeed in forgetting for a moment where we are, and friends, who perhaps think of us no more, Danes and Greenlanders, file past us, while the roaring stream outside thunders and swells with the rain.

The dogs, lying drenched in the wet, whine plaintively now and again; but the hills merely play with their yelping, and the echo of it rings across and across the fjord head.

*July 24.*—Rained all night. Towards morning the storm gave over, the clouds parted and the sun streamed down upon us. We attempted at three different places to cross the stream separating us from the drive up the glacier leading to Itivdleq on the other side of the mainland, but in vain.

By the time the water was up to our knees, the current was so strong that we almost lost our footing and were in danger of being carried off with it. Originally there were two streams only at the head of the bay, but in the last few days they have multiplied sadly. The terrific downpour has transformed the little valley into a whole network of streamlets. Altogether I counted eighteen, large and small.

An attempt at low water along the beach, leaping from one floe to another, was likewise unsuccessful. And the middle of the bay is now open water; the ice we were driving upon has been broken up by the storm. We are under siege. Seven glaciers shoot down to the head of the bay where we are; on the other

side is the valley with the eighteen streams, and below it, the open bay itself.

*July 25.*—Qisunguaq discovered a way up over a cliff about 2000 feet high, bare of snow. It was no easy matter to get the sledges up. Driving across the glacier was not without danger, either; there were many rushing streams, the passage of which gave plenty of trouble; I fell off twice and got wet through, but as there was a strong wind I soon got dry again. Some of the streams, with soft, deep snow on the sides, we had to cross by hurling ourselves over, to fall flat, rather than on our feet or legs, as otherwise we were in danger of disappearing altogether.

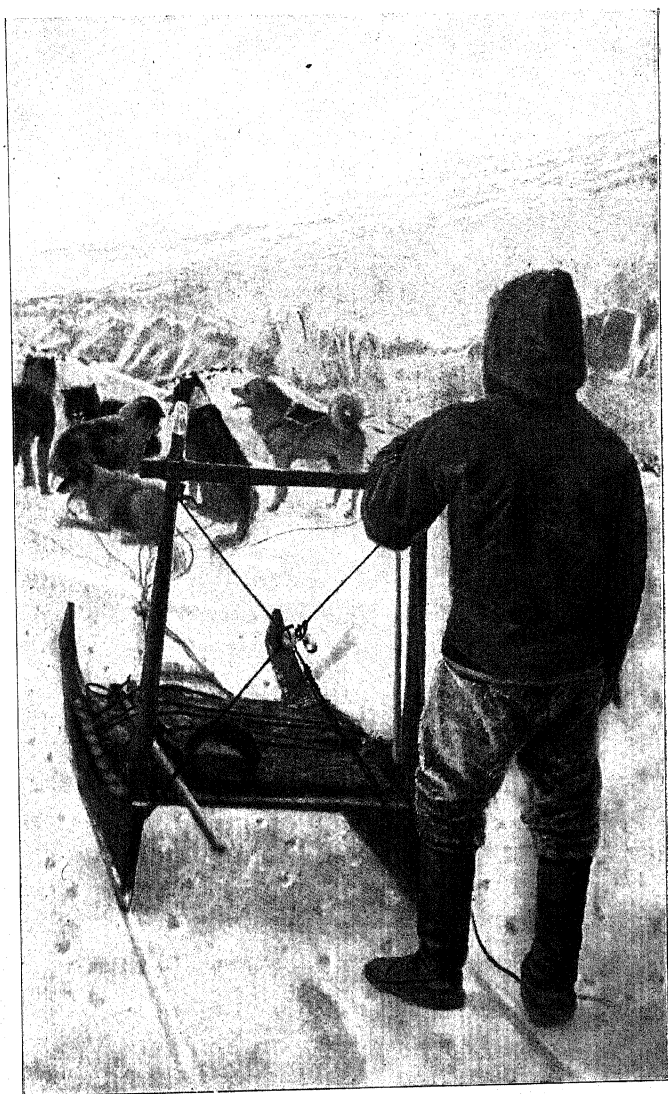
Late in the evening we have reached the place where begins the descent to Itivdleq, whence we were to cross to Qanâ. We are 2400 feet above the level of the sea and there is a superb view; but all our efforts have been wasted; Qanâ, where the boat is, is inaccessible. The ice is all broken up into floes.

■ It is night, and our journey has been a hard one; our provisions are at an end; we can only fling ourselves down on our sledges and sleep our fatigue away. On the top of the hill, a terrific storm is howling.

*July 26.*—We cannot get back to Agpat; and we must get into communication with men somewhere as soon as possible. Food we must have, and new foot-gear. We have tried to bind the soles of our kamiks (soft leather boots) together with thread; but they are so worn from the crumbling sandstone rocks and the sharp glacier ice that they are in holes that leave our feet bare. It is painful walking on the rocks, and it is abominably cold travelling on the ice.

We must attempt to reach Natsilivik; perhaps there are men there.

We break up towards midday and drive to the top of the glacier ridge, about 3400 feet up. We drive all day in a glorious sunshine through deep snow. Marvellously lovely glacier landscapes spread themselves out before us; there is a view over the whole of Whale Sound, with its







islands, and the island of Agpat, and Wolstenholme with Jának. The sea is like a mirror, but up here, where we are driving, a fresh north wind is blowing, and it is cold—in spite of the sun.

The glacier drops gently down to Natsilivik, and we have an enjoyable drive downhill of two to three hours, with, when the snow is not too deep, good going.

We are above the clouds, for there hangs a thick fog down over Natsilivik while we are driving along in sunshine.

Down at the edge of the glacier, where we have to guide our team with great caution, as there is no snow, there are great glacier fountains, and several magnificent red water-springs, which give birth to red streamlets.

“It is the glacier bleeding!” says Qisunguaq of these great red springs, which gush up through narrow openings and rise in a thick stream, till they are scattered by the wind and fall away to the sides, like a waving crown of flowers.

At the edge of the glacier we leave our sledges and baggage behind and walk down to Natsilivik, where we arrive towards midnight.

No one there!

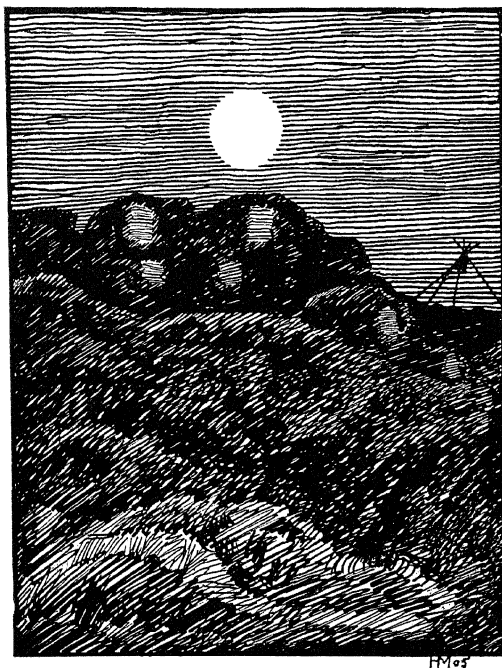
*July 27.*—A dense fog further increases the difficulty of all search. Jörgen and Sitdluk have gone down to the houses at Natsilivik to see if there are meat deposits to be found.

Qisunguaq and I cross a ridge and make our way down to a creek, Narssaq, where there used to be tents.

We advance through the fog, seeing nothing and hoping for no more, our feet sore and our stomachs empty. After a few hours' toilsome march, we reach a rapid stream which we cannot cross; and we lie down under a great boulder, discuss the position, and decide which of the dogs we shall be obliged to shoot, if we do not meet with people. We have eaten nothing for forty hours, and the last few days' travelling have been exhausting. Just as we are dropping asleep the fog lifts suddenly and we are inspired with fresh hope. We fling large stones into the stream, but the current

carries them with it. At last one stone remains in place and we dare the crossing.

We are over ; we run up the opposite bank, which is steep and high, and both utter wild cries of delight : at a distance of about 200 yards there are five tents . . . people!—and food . . . food!



H. Mos

UMANÂQ, SEEN FROM THE BEACH



## THE DARK DRAWS NEAR

It is a strange life that we live up here; no programme of arrangements is ever drawn up; the days bring their own diversions and their own work. The only thing laid down beforehand for each day is the allotted portion of walrus flesh that we have to eat to keep our bodies in fit condition for work. But, should a happy suggestion occur to any one, it is acted upon at once.

On September 1st we were intending to hold high festival, for that day we had completed the stone house in which we were going to pass the winter. It was an extraordinary house, this that we had made for ourselves. We had carried our building materials from the rocks, where there was stone and to spare. For two long weeks our arms and backs had ached, with dragging down the boulders of rock and piling them up. And when it stood there complete, we christened it the "Cave in the Cliff,"—for it was little more, having been built practically in the side of the cliff, with the rock itself for its inside wall. There were two rooms in it—a sleeping-room for six men, and a working and cooking room. The walls were entirely of stone. The roof had been constructed with the help of four oars, which we had obtained from Scottish whalers, with cross-beams made of barrel-staves, the whole covered with turf. In the work-room we had set up three empty provision-chests which were to serve the Danish members of the expedition as writing-tables. In the sleeping-room we had built a raised pallet of stone, on which we laid our sleeping-bags. The floor was of flat stones.

But we were very proud of our handiwork and glad enough of the shelter we had made ourselves from the Polar winter; and now we were anxious to dedicate it to its purpose by

filling it with happy people. All the Eskimos in the village were ceremoniously invited up to tea. From the Norwegian ship *Gjøa*, we had had a bag of currant biscuit which, as a rule, we dealt out sparingly in daily rations at tea ; but we sacrificed this to the occasion, and vastly it was appreciated.

Our phonograph, which, it is true, had grown somewhat hoarse, supplied the necessary music for the entertainment, and Harald Moltke provided some very effective fireworks, by letting off a few magnesium shells. This may sound all very childish and foolish, read among the manifold resources of civilisation ; but to us, up in that little Eskimo camp, it meant



a great deal. Our spirits rose high and we saw our strange existence in a very festive light.

In this marvellous land you can hold perfect bacchanalia on a few cups of tea and a little mouldy bread.

It was something new only to be in a real house again ; we had lived in tents and snow-huts ever since we left Upernivik in March. The room seemed to us palatially large, and the rude rock face in the background, the stone walls and the stone floor, lent to the whole interior a brigand aspect which quite took our fancy. Unfortunately the old robber grandmother was lacking. When, later on in the evening, we lighted our little blubber lamps, it was all more fantastic still, and I felt a delight in our cave which I could hardly explain, even to myself. I was obliged to go away, down to



GABRIEL COOKING IN THE "CAVE IN THE CLIFF"





the sea, and from there I gazed up at the twinkling little eye of light among the rocks.

Up there then, in that cave half-buried in the cliff, we were to await our fate, the Winter and the Dark. We were going to pass the next few months of cold and night far north of the civilisation which so many of us regard as a necessity of life. Our tiny winter lair was of cold stones, and we had no stove to warm ourselves with, and no firing. And we should have to procure our food from day to day. And yet—I felt a warming wave of joy rush through my body, the joy which those who live on their travels feel most keenly : excitement at the rich possibilities of life !

On my way home I met an old heathen woman, Arnaluk. She stopped me and pointed out over the sea.

“Dost thou see that ?” she asked.

“What ?”

“That—out there over the sea. It is the Dark coming up, the great Dark !” she said gravely, and crept away home.

The sea was calm, and the awl-like summits of the hills stood up against the sky like supports. It was twilight, but you could see a long way. A black bank of fog lay up against the horizon : so that was the Polar night advancing.

I went back to our cave and found there a score of Eskimos, men and women, almost standing on one another for want of room, listening to one of the records of the phonograph orchestra : it was Wagner’s “Tannhäuser.”

The light dazzled my eyes.

When the phonograph ceased, the cave rang with peals of happy laughter. No one had a thought to spare for the Dark and the Winter.

The first dark evenings are hailed with the same glee as the first daylight, after the Polar night. Up there, as here, people like change. When, a whole summer through, your eyes have been bathed in light, day and night, you long to see the land vanish softly into the darkness again, that the stars and the moon may light their lamps.

And with the idea of change they associate the thought

of all the good things the winter will bring with it: the frozen sea, and the hunting on the ice, and the swift sledge-drives, far from the sweltering houses, after bears.

"Ha! now the dark nights are coming, soon the ice will close in the sea!" the men cry, as they meet, towards evening.

"Be glad, for soon blubber lamps shall light those who go out to fetch meat from the flesh-pits!" others call out.

"And windows and fires shall light far out in the night,



and hasten the lagging pace of late-returning sledges!" adds another.

With such exclamations the change is greeted by the little groups that meet in an evening to chat. The eager ones get their sledges out to examine the bone runners, repair old damage, or cut new harness or traces for the dogs. All must be ready for the gifts the cold brings with it.

And the lower the sun circles towards the horizon, the lovelier in its vivid colouring the Polar country grows. Light and darkness wrestle in blood-red sunsets, and the clouds with the light behind them, crimson-gashed, glide out into the night.

I stood in the centre of a gay group on just such a late summer evening; the men, old and young, sat clustered round a seal-catcher who was making a sledge. Behind us, shouting children played their games.

Suddenly one of them called out, "qqaitsorssuákut!" which, in this connection, means, "The men with boats without masts!"

The cry was echoed by the whole tribe of them, and all tore in a wild race up to the hills, where they hid in the hollows of the stones.

I wanted to know what it all meant, and my question gave one of the old ones an opportunity of narrating an interesting legend.

"Do you see that low, black iceberg yonder?" he began; "that is what the children are running away from. In olden days, at the approach of the first dark evenings, there was always a good look-out kept on the sea; for it sometimes happened that ships came into sight, out at sea: ships without masts. They were nakasungnaitut, the short-legged men, or, as they were also called, qavdlunâtsait, a race of white men who were very warlike; they used to come up here with great boats, the sterns of which were higher than the bows, so the old people tell us.

"These white men came originally from these parts, so tradition relates in the legend of the girl who married a dog.

"These qavdlunâtsait were amongst her children; when they grew up, she made a boat out of the sole of a leather boot and started them out to sea, so that they might sail to the country where the white men lived.

"'Ye shall be fighting men!' she had said to them when they went away. These are the words of the legend.

"After that, men were always afraid of the ships that came up here, for they invariably picked quarrels, and killed. But often a dark iceberg was mistaken for them, and roused false terror in a village; and that is what has now grown into a game among the children.

"One year it was already winter when sledges, which were out hunting walruses, discovered one of the white men's big ships frozen up in the ice. That was out beyond Northumberland Island.

"The people knew from experience that sooner or later

these men would come and attack them, and so they decided to be beforehand with them.

"Armed with lances and harpoons they rushed up against them on foot. The ice round the ship was new and smooth, and so they bound the skin from the palate of seals round their feet, that they might not slip. The white men were taken by surprise, and, as they found it difficult to run on the smooth ice, it was an easy matter to overcome them. Thus the men from these parts avenged the deaths of many of their compatriots.

"After that they plundered the ship and shared the booty between them. One of them ran off with a box. When he got it home and opened it, what should there be in it but a beautiful laughing boy! He had most certainly been hidden there to save him from being killed.

"The man let the white boy grow up with his own little son, and the two grew very fond of each other. The white boy used to catch ravens for his foster-brother, and soon became very adroit. He would pretend to be a dog, crawl along the ground, and get so close to them that he could bring them down with stones.

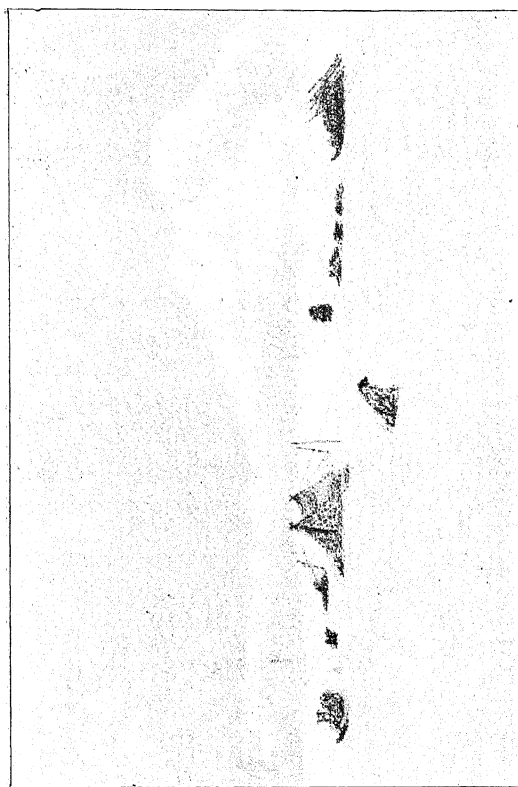
"Every one was very fond of the strange boy, who grew up just like the children here, and learnt to catch seals as we do. They made him a shirt of seal bladder, that rendered him invisible to bears, so it was said.

"It is told that the boy grew homesick when he saw the sky turn red in an evening; then he began to talk of milk and the sweet dishes that he had been accustomed to in the white men's land, and after that he would grow silent.

"One day he went out, stayed out, and never came back. They looked for him everywhere, but could not even find his footprints.

"Up near Cape York, some of his clothing was found, and that was all: it was the seal-bladder shirt. So the old people supposed that his longing for home had grown so strong that he had flown through the air to the white men's land.

"That is what the old story tells. And it tells the truth, for you are strange, you white foreigners; one fine day you appear in our country, and as soon as we have learnt to care for you, you vanish, and we do not know where you go."



CAMP ON THE ICE: ICEBERG IN THE BACKGROUND



## WEATHERBOUND

"THE world is ill at ease, the sea does not freeze!" said my friend Qisunguaq, pointing across the open water in front of Dalrymple Rock. The frost-fogs lay out on the horizon, whirled about in the wind like smoke from a beacon fire.

"The world is ill at ease?" I repeated.

Qisunguaq began to prove his assertion.

"Our world up here," he explained, "does not love strangers, for then she has to be showing herself off all the time. This year has not passed as it usually does; see, we shall soon be at the end of the visiting month (November) and we have still heard nothing from the villages south, near Cape York. That has never happened before, and it must be your presence that is the reason of it. Do you not understand? Our earth is ashamed!"

My good friend's explanation must assuredly have been the truth; undoubtedly something was wrong, for the sea was unusually late in freezing over that year. We were at the end of November, and still the ice was unsafe at critical passages like Cape Atholl and the glacier at Igfigsoq.

Nevertheless it was our intention just then to make an attempt to slip across Melville Bay during the December moon, and for that reason I had to go, together with my Eskimo comrade, Qisunguaq, to reconnoitre the ice southward.

We had just been on the hills to look out, and my guide had not been quite satisfied with the result. The light did not permit us to see far, for we were already in the middle of the Polar night, and yet, out on the horizon, we could detect open water. The ice was still only a narrow belt along the shore.

"Try to drive round Igfigsoq Glacier! If you can do that it promises well for the journey south; but you know the



Dark is best suited for sleep and happy meetings, among those who have their flesh-pits filled," said the old people, when they saw us making our preparations for departure. It was only a day's journey to the glacier they mentioned.

We decided to make the attempt.

We drove on new ice, our sledge being shod with walrus tusks, the best running for that purpose. A slap against the leg of our boots—a sound which starts well-trained dogs at a wild gallop—and off we rushed over the ice, and had soon overtaken the view at which we had been gazing. Now and again the team scented seal or walrus, through breathing-holes, and then we nodded and laughed at each other, and seized fast hold of the thongs of the sledge. For hunting dogs do not spare their strength when they smell the prey, and they hunger and thirst for warm blood.

An hour after midday the light was gone, and we drove on through the white darkness of the Polar night. The details of the landscape melted strangely one into the other, like frozen fog, and little ice-covered hills looked like mountains.

Sixteen miles from Saunders Island, our starting-point, we safely passed one of the most critical points of our journey, Cape Atholl; even from a distance we saw the frost mist above the open water, and were already prepared to turn back when, in the dusk, we discovered a very narrow bridge of ice, which led along shore between two places kept open by the current.

The good ice carried us rapidly forward, and soon we could catch a glimpse of the renowned glacier; then the view was shut off for us by a gale from the south-west, snow-laden. The snow was thrown up by our sledges so furiously that we could hardly see the dogs.

Qisunguaq knew of a shelter four miles further on, "Pâkit-soq, the cave in the mountain with the narrow entrance." We had to try, therefore, to gain that. Despite the dark and the blinding snow, we managed to reach it.

The entrance was so narrow that we had a great deal of difficulty in entering; we had to lie flat on our faces and creep forward at first, then suddenly the opening widened out and we

were able to stand upright. From the reverberation of our voices we could judge that the cave was a high one and extended a long way back; what we said echoed and re-echoed, as if from the vaulting of an empty church. We lighted a torch of turf and blubber, and a circular roof of hard stone was revealed above our heads, evoking in us a curious, sepulchral mood.

The cave was wide, and rounded towards the front; at the back it branched off into two aisles, with a sharp stone ridge between them. The arches were like the unfinished work of



human hands, in some places smooth and polished, in others rough and uneven, with great blocks projecting. The back was covered with ice, and in the torchlight stood white and gleaming, like a pagan sacrificial altar; ice crystals hung down from the vaulted roof, and rime drops glistened. The floor was of great blocks of stone that had been swept in by waves from the south-west.

The whole place was permeated by a strong smell of seaweed; we seemed to be at the bottom of the sea. And, keeping our balance with difficulty on the uneven floor, in our long-haired bear-skin breeches, and with our long, unkempt hair, we bore a marked resemblance to gnomes.

The dogs were tethered in a partially sheltered spot outside,

and we brought the sleeping-bags and our walrus provision inside. It was no soft couch that awaited us on the stones, but, on such a journey, the body gets used to anything. We crept in between our reindeer skins to sleep and forget it all; but the dogs yelping for food, which it was quite impossible to give them in the dark and blinding snow, kept us awake a long time. Now and then they got on their feet, dragged at their traces and barked, to reproach us with our heartlessness; they were somewhat like soldiers attempting mutiny.

"Are you asleep?" I hear from Qisunguaq, after we have lain silent half the night.

"No-o!"

"That is well; save your sleep. We shall have to lie here weatherbound more than one twenty-four hours, with the southwest wind beginning work like this. You will have good use for your dreams!"

Then silence falls between us again. A moment later a quite unrestrained snore announces that my travelling companion is far away from the cold cave, in well-lighted huts where good women receive men with warm and comforting seal-soup.

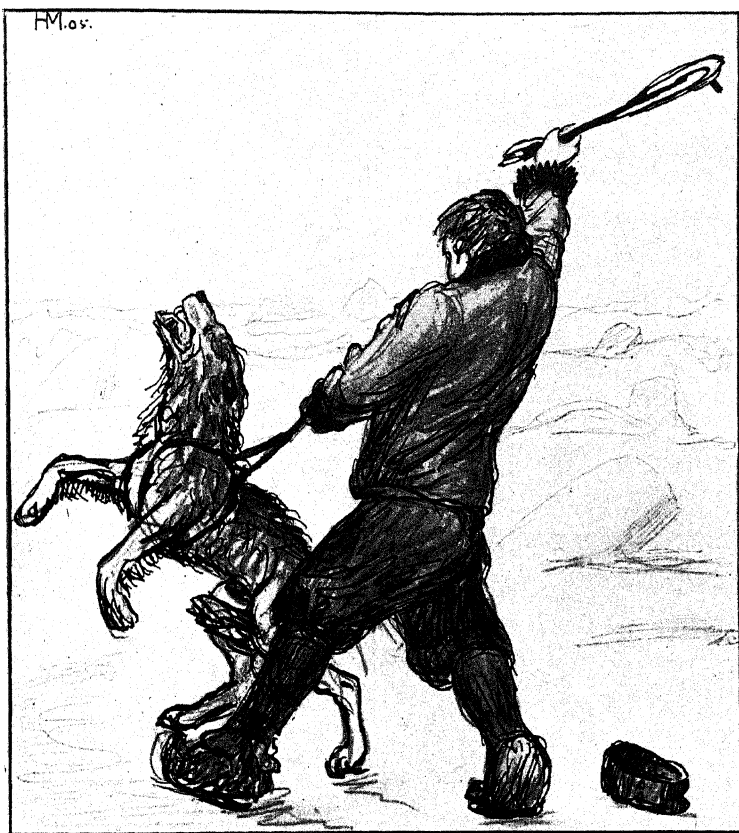
A dull, greenish glimmer penetrated through the entrance to the cave and made its way across to our resting-place, a narrow strip of light; we could just catch sight of each other, so it must be twelve o'clock, the lightest part of the day.

"The dogs!" said Qisunguaq. Yes, the poor dogs! We crawled out of our reindeer skins, lighted a blubber torch, and began to chop at the frozen walrus meat. For ourselves we cut a few thin slices which we began to chew. What we were able to hack off was mostly blubber; but the storm seemed to be rising and we had to be careful.

Fat blubber generally gives the dogs stomach-ache, but for the time being they would not have to work.

So we made our way out with it and the animals attacked it ravenously; they had been fasting for over thirty-six hours.

When we got inside again we decided to make ourselves



PUNISHMENT DUE



as comfortable in our quarters as was possible under the circumstances. We would have a light as long as we had blubber, and we would satisfy our hunger as long as our meat lasted. So we put a large lump of blubber in a hollow stone behind our couch and placed in it a whole clump of turf for a wick; this gave a curious light with peculiar, sharply defined shadows. With the help of an ingenious erection of two harpoon poles we fashioned a support from which we were able to hang over the fire a quondam butter box, which, however, was now raised to the dignity of a saucepan. Lying warm and comfortable in our reindeer skins, we could easily reach to attend to the fire, which was to shed a festive light over the vaultings of the rock and boil our little pot; after a very short time it provided us with a scalding hot soup, which warmed us well through, and with a few inviting morsels of cooked walrus meat,—and we found this means of wooing slumber quite infallible.

When living this primitive life, one develops a quite extraordinary feeling of well-being in the heavy, dozing satisfaction that leads to sleep and dreams. You take your rest when it offers itself, and you take it thoroughly, and drink it in in deep draughts; that storm and misfortune must be slept through, is the sound principle of the Eskimos. Then, they can take a brush, when necessary, and there are few of us civilised men who have as much staying power. The chance and hazard of existence brings many surprises, and you soon learn to seize and enjoy what offers.

Our day, that time, only lasted the few hours that were needed to satisfy the hunger of the dogs and our own; our blubber lamp had still not burnt itself out when we both fell asleep.

Later on in the night we were awakened by loud barking, and held our breaths to listen.

"Bears? bears?" we whispered to each other; but no growl could rise above the storm. The dogs yelped furiously for a time, then all was quiet again.

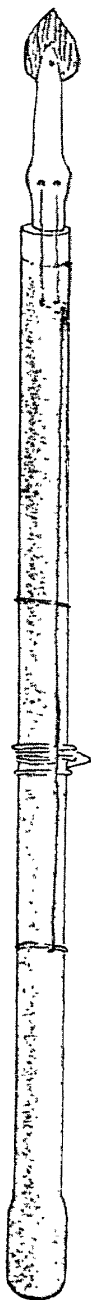
"aliasungnaraluaq!" (uncanny), said Qisunguaq, then turned over and went to sleep again.

*November 25.*—This is the second day we have been weather-bound in the cave ; the third night is drawing in and the south-west wind is still raging. The swell has set the ice in rocking motion, and the ice-foot is grinding against the rocks, sobbing and crying ; this is what the Eskimos call “the weeping of those under the earth.” The ice will most certainly reveal cruel rents ; in no case shall we be able to round Cape Atholl.

Our team of dogs has shrunk sadly ; three that we had bought have deserted. Or were they bears, after all, who paid us a visit last night ? In that case, the dogs, who were well trained for the chase, would undoubtedly be out in pursuit. We have tried to examine the footprints outside, but, in the driving snow, nothing could be distinguished.

We still have meat and blubber ; we can still afford, the few hours of the day that we are awake, to have our cave cheerfully lighted up. Far from other humans, out in the middle of the great Polar desolation, it can be exceedingly snug and agreeable for two alone together in a primitive shelter from the howling storm. So long as the bad weather does not persist too many days you do not grow in the least weary ; you enjoy the comfort of it with the best conscience in the world, knowing that you are only preparing yourself for hardships to come, and for when you will be able to procure neither rest nor food.

And two people can feel a curiously strong affection for each other when they are, as in this case, reduced to each other's society, and tossed aside in a cave in a rock for an indefinite period. You are indispensable to one another. Some of the pleasantest memories of my travels are the recollections of days when I have lain weatherbound on a desolate coast, far from the conveniences of the overheated huts. There grows up within you a feeling that you have just defeated the malice of the storm nicely when, despite an unexpected attack, you have been able to reach a satisfactory shelter, and you can rest at ease with a good friend, wrapped in soft skins—with well-filled stomachs and delicacies to eat—and laugh at everything. You feel yourself master of the situation.



HARPOON



LANCE





During the days that we spent together in the cave I grew very fond of Qisunguaq; it was not that we talked so much, but he was such a pleasant companion when one woke up.

"You have masters in your country?" he said to me one day, after we had eaten, "and a master is a man of wisdom and power, who can think thoughts for other people as well as himself, and tell one what to do?"

"Yes, that is what a master ought to be," I replied.

"I should very much like to have a master, and I should like to choose thee," went on Qisunguaq.

"Perhaps thou wouldst get tired of it, Qisunguaq. All you men up here are accustomed to be the masters of your thoughts and actions yourselves."

"Yes; but a master gives the one who helps him possessions. That is what the great Peary always did up here. And I am fond of thee; and I should like to possess something."

Qisunguaq was an orphan, and had neither wife, dogs, nor gun, although he was over twenty years of age. His father had at one time been the best seal-catcher in the tribe; his house had been known far and near as the largest and warmest, and for that reason many strangers repaired to it in the dark season, during his great feasts. Food was always prepared ready on the floor. But the father had been killed by a fall from a bird rock while his son was still a child; and so Qisunguaq had grown up with no one to give him the implements of the chase. Moreover, he had had a younger brother and sister whom he had to feed. When others came back from their seal or walrus hunting he would borrow their guns and harpoons, and, as he was a clever hunter, it was never long before he brought something back with him. He had also made a name for himself as a reindeer hunter, for few could find the animals and entice them within shooting range as he could. So he never lacked food or clothing; but the desire himself to become the owner of something had taken possession of him.

The whole of the summer, autumn, and winter he had borrowed guns and dogs from me, and we had gone through much and travelled far together.

"To our kinsmen's land far south, too, I would like to follow thee. I am tired of living as a man possessing nothing. And my little brother will grow up to the same life, unless I can get something for him. Possessions I must have, and a wife to look after my clothes. And so thou shalt be my master."

Qisunguaq received a promise that all his wishes should be fulfilled, if he would only accompany me south. Here, in his own land, he knew that I possessed no more than I needed for my own requirements.

During the night Qisunguaq related a story.

"There was once a man named Alùssaq; people used to call him the man who loved his wife. And it was the truth; but his wife really was beautiful and good. Once they were out on a hunting expedition, Alùssaq, his wife and their little child. Near Natsilivik the ice had been carried off by the north wind, and as they had to cross Nungarugssuaq Fjeld, they were obliged to drive along the ice-foot; above them frowned the precipitous wall of the rocks, below them was the sea. The ice-foot was narrow, and a sure hand was needed to steer. The child lay bundled up in skins on the sledge, the wife held fast to the uprights, walking behind, while the husband went in front to guide the dogs. The sledge gave a lurch over a little hummock of ice, and the child rolled over into the sea and sank.

"'Our little child!' cried the woman, bursting into tears. But her husband went quietly up to her and said: 'Forget the child! As long as we two live, we can well spare children.'

"And they went on.

"Farther on they came to a glacier which they had to cross; the descent was close to a village. The houses were in sight as they drove down, and the people, who were expecting them, came out to meet them. The husband was sitting astride the sledge and the wife was guiding it by the uprights. The pace grew faster, as they went down, and, as they came to a bad place, the wife overbalanced and was flung against the



QISUNGUAQ



points of the uprights, which pierced her breasts ; and she fell dead by the side of the sledge.

“ ‘ Inutaq is dead ! ’ cried her husband ; and the people from the village came running up just as he laid the dead body on the sledge.

“ Then the husband flung himself, weeping, upon her, and took a last long embrace of his dead wife.

“ It was his farewell.

“ Then he sewed the body in skins and dragged it up to a heap of stones, where he buried it. This is what the old people have told us of Alússaq.”

Yes, Qisunguaq, you grow strange and wild up here in this extraordinary land !

*November 27.*—This morning, at last, the storm abated ; it was still blowing freshly and snowing, but it was possible to travel. I crawled out of the cave, went out on the ice, clear of a promontory that impeded the view, and involuntarily I took a step backward. There lay the Igfigsoq Glacier, immeasurable in extent ; whitish yellow in the pale daylight, it lost itself in swells of fog far out on the horizon. It was midday, and a ray of red sunlight penetrated the haze, like the reflection of a fire very far away ; on the south-west wing the colours were sharp and yellow, the sky overcast and rent with gashes of blue. The dark blue precipices at the edge of the glacier itself stood out like walls against the soft, red blush at the summit ; but the ice on the sea, out beyond the glacier, gleamed pale green in the daylight. This was the Polar day in all its splendour.

It is good sometimes to feel the power of Nature over one. You bend in silence and accept the beauty, without words.

Thou Wondrous Earth !

I had crept out of the cave in a somewhat vexed frame of mind, for, of our entire team, there were only three dogs left ; the rest had deserted during the scant entertainment of the storm. And how were we going to drive the long way home with three dogs ? Further than that, we were somewhat anxious lest the gale should have torn up the ice that we had hoped to drive upon. The prospect before us was no

gay one. But when I came out into the daylight and saw the glacier and the colours, a warm rush shot through me. This was worth enduring much for.

I turned back, content, and had soon got the sledge ready for the start, two of the dogs that had run away having come back in the meantime, to our great surprise ; they had only gone off to poke about among the seals' breathing-holes.

Then we made our team gallop right up to the edge of the glacier. Ice, ice! then it would be possible to get back.



Next we clambered up an iceberg, to get a view: no open water anywhere! Only the frost-mist far out at sea.

Two happy men sat on the sledge that drove down towards Agpat.

Qisunguaq did not attain to riches and possessions that time. He cancelled the agreement as the hour for our departure approached.

"There is so much to think of," he had said again and again to me, since we had arranged, that day in the cave, to go south together.

And he thought himself mad over his plans for the future. His madness broke out one dark evening that we were out together.

We had been walking side by side in silence for some time.

"Riches and possessions are death!" he burst out suddenly. "I will follow thee far away south," he went on, "and thou wilt keep thy word and give me precious weapons, I know that. But amongst strangers I shall die. My body will not know life in other countries; rich in gifts, I shall be obliged to sacrifice the breath of my life to strangers."

"Qisunguaq, thou art not speaking with thine own tongue; thou art ill."

"The spirits of the dead have talked with me; my words are wisdom, like the speech of our forefathers. I have seen hidden things!" he shouted, and began to tremble all over. He had closed his eyes and his fists were convulsively clenched. To a wild and confused measure, he struck up a spirit song, which broke off in hysterical fits of sobbing.

I held him by the shoulders to quiet him; he rushed at me with a roar, and for a long time we struggled together, stumbling in the dark over the stones. He pressed his face against my neck, as if he were trying to bite me, and ground his teeth with rage.

"Is it usual amongst you, Qisunguaq, for friends to fight like enemies?"

"Friends?" he shrieked, "I have always been afraid of thee. Thou hadst a power over me that I did not understand; I was afraid of thee even when thou smiledst. But thou didst not know it, because I did not dare to speak. Now Death has opened my mouth. Kill me! I am not afraid of anything any more."

"Look, look!—ha, ha! Dost thou not see, just in front of us? he has come to fetch me; it is the spirit of great Mîjuk. Yes, yes! I am coming. I shall not be long," he called out. "Do you not see him, pointing up to heaven? Mîjuk was the only one who cared for me. He has seen that they were unkind to me down here after his death, and now he beckons me."

Again he interrupted his talk with a wildly chanted spirit-song which, as before, ended in convulsive weeping.

"Qisunguaq, see, I am Mîjuk's spirit; I always meant good to thee; follow me!" I whispered in his ear.



All at once a strange calm came over him ; his body ceased to tremble, and, in his natural voice, he said to me—

“ Now thou canst go ; I am well again. The blood rushed to my head, that was all. Leave me alone, now.”

But I stayed with him for some time longer, as if nothing had happened, and at last we went back to the village. Qisunguaq was himself again, quiet and kind.

The day after when, as usual, I went to fetch him to be my guide on a sledge journey, he was nowhere to be found. I inquired for him in every house ; no one had seen him. And he had not slept in the village, either. So he must have wandered about all night ; but where ? We searched everywhere ; not even a footprint rewarded our efforts.

I had begun to cherish serious misgivings as to the fate of my friend, when a few days later a sledge arrived from Umanaq and solved the riddle for us. The man told us that Qisunguaq was there ; he had arrived running early one morning, exhausted, and in a violent perspiration. He had taken it into his head to go visiting, and so he had come, he had explained. Immediately after his arrival he had been taken in at “ the young people’s house,” and was now casting sheep’s eyes at young Miss Kujapik.

This was the news with which we were regaled.

In every village there is a house only lived in by the young, unmarried men and women. Here, in the “ young people’s house,” men select their wives. They live together for a time without any responsibilities towards each other, beyond the single nights ; if it so happens that they like each other, and if their respective parents have no objections to raise, the loose relationship develops into a genuine marriage, and they remain together for always.

A month had passed since Qisunguaq’s memorable flight, when I went up to Umanaq to eat narwhal with a good friend of mine ; there I met with the fugitive. We talked as if nothing had happened ; but I noticed that he avoided me. Of plans for our journey to the south we spoke no more. Nor did we ever again go on a trip by sledge

together. Our friendship had suffered a rift which was never healed.

But even before we left the neighbourhood, rumour had it that Qisunguaq had taken Kujapik to wife and had travelled north.





## PART II

### PRIMITIVE VIEWS OF LIFE

*Our tales are men's experiences, and the things one hears of are not always lovely things. But one cannot deck a tale to make it pleasant, if at the same time it shall be true.*

*The tongue must be the echo of the event and cannot adapt itself to taste or caprice.*

*To the words of the newly born none give much credence, but the experience of older generations contains truth. When I narrate legends, it is not I who speak, it is the wisdom of our forefathers, speaking through me.*

OSARQAQ.



## THE CREATION

THE Polar Eskimos have based their ideas of life on a series of legends and customs which have been handed down by oral tradition for untold generations. Their dead forefathers, they say, enshrined all their wisdom and all their experiences in what they related to those who came after them. And none may accuse the dead of untrustworthiness. Wisdom goes in a retrograde direction; none can measure themselves with the fathers of the race, none can defy sickness and misfortune, and therefore people are still subject to all the old prohibitions. If there should be anything they do not understand, they believe it all the same, "for," they say, "who can prove that what he does not understand is wrong? And is it not wiser to bow to it and obey, when you are too ignorant and incapable to draw up anything better yourself?" That is the sort of reply you receive to inquiries.

But light can only be thrown on their primitive conceptions of the world by their own reflections thereupon; so, in what follows, I shall record as objectively as possible the observations that I made in association and conversation with them.

An old woman named Arnáluk told me the following story of the Creation.

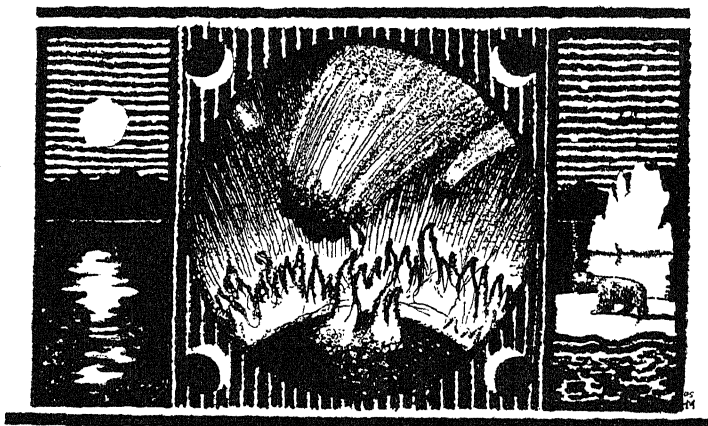
### THAT TIME LONG, LONG AGO, WHEN MEN FIRST WERE

Our forefathers talked much of the making of the world and of men—at that time so very long ago.

They did not understand how to hide words in strokes, like you do; they only told things by word of mouth, the people who lived before us; they told of many things, and

that is why we are not ignorant of these things, which we have heard repeated time after time, ever since we were children. Old women do not fling their words about without meaning, and we believe them. There are no lies with age.

That time, very long ago, when the earth was made, it dropped down from above—the soil, the hills and the stones—down from the heavens; and that is how the world came into existence. When the world was made, people came. They say that they came up out of the earth. Babies came out of the earth. They came out among the willow bushes, covered with



willow leaves. And they lay there among the dwarf willows with closed eyes and sprawled. They could not even crawl about. They got their food from the earth.

Then there is a story of a man and a woman; but how can it be? It is a riddle—when did they find each other, when did they grow up? I do not know. But the woman made babies' clothes and wandered about. She found the babies, dressed them, and brought them home.

That is how there came to be so many people.

When there were so many of them, they wanted dogs. And a man went out with dog's harness in his hand, and began to stamp on the ground, calling "Hoc, hoc, hoc!" Then the dogs sprang out of little tiny mounds. And they shook them-

selves well, for they were covered with sand. That is how men got dogs.

But men increased; they grew more and more numerous. They did not know Death, at that time so very long ago, and they grew very old; at length they could not walk, they grew blind and had to lie down.

Nor did they know the Sun; they lived in the dark; the daylight never dawned. It was only inside the houses that there was light; they burnt water in the lamps; at that time water would burn.

But the people who did not know how to die grew too many; they overfilled the earth—and then there came a mighty flood. Many men were drowned, and men grew fewer. The traces of this flood are to be found on the tops of the high hills, where you often find shells.

Then when men had grown fewer, two old women began one day to talk to each other. "Let us do without the daylight, if at the same time we can be without Death!" said the one; doubtless she was afraid of death. "Nay!" said the other, "we will have both Light and Death." And as the old woman said those words, it was so—Light came and with it Death.

It is said that when the first man died, they covered up the corpse with stones. But the body came back; it did not properly understand how to die. It stuck its head up from the stone sleeping-place and tried to get up. But an old woman pushed it back.

"We have enough to drag about with us and our sledges are small!"

They were, you must know, just about to start on a seal-catching expedition.

And so the corpse had to return to its stone grave.

As men by this had light, they could go on long seal-hunting expeditions, and no longer needed to eat the soil. And with Death came the Sun, the Moon, and the Stars.

For when people die, they go up to Heaven and grow luminous.



That is what our forefathers used to tell us, and their tales gave us knowledge.

Another old woman, Aisivak, gave me a variation of this account when I asked her about the origin of man. In the beginning, she said, the world was inhabited only by two men, who were both great magicians. As they wished to grow more in number, one of them altered his body, so that he might give birth to children, and after that they had many children.

How the first two men were created, Aisivak did not know, however. And where? Nor did she know that! "The world is so great, and we know so little," she explained.

Qilerneq, the oldest man in the tribe, narrates a legend which contains in a few words their conception of what the world is.

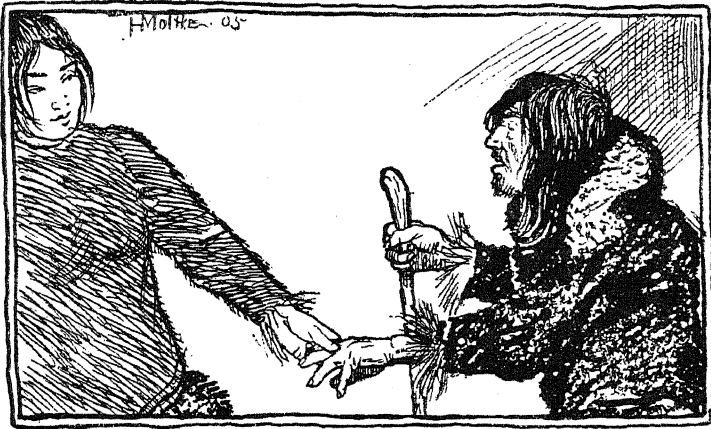
#### THE TWO FRIENDS WHO WISHED TO TRAVEL ROUND THE WORLD

Once upon a time two men thought they would like to travel round the world, that they might be able to tell others what it was like.

That was in the days when there were still many people and all countries were inhabited. Now we are growing fewer and fewer. Accidents and sickness (*perdlugssuaq*) have come upon men. You see that I drag out my life without being able to stand on my legs.

The two who were anxious to set out on their travels had just taken wives and had as yet no children. They cut themselves drinking-cups from musk-ox horns, each of them one, cut from the same head, and then they set out, each in his own direction, to meet again some day. They set off with sledges and used to encamp when the summer came. It took them a long time to get round the world; they had children, they grew old, and the children themselves grew old; at length the parents were so old that they could not walk alone, and the children guided them.

At last they met, and then there was nothing left of their drinking-horns but the handles, so many times had they drunk on the way, and scraped the horns against the ground, as they poured into them.



“The world is very large,” they said when they met.

They were young when they had set out; then they were old men who had to be led by their children.

Yes, the world is large!

## MEN

WHERE the first men came into existence they cannot tell. But they have a vague idea that it was somewhere west, on the other side of the sea, and that, in the course of ages, they have migrated eastward. Once they were a great people; now they are growing fewer and fewer.

Originally all men were Eskimos, just as they are themselves, but it happened once that a girl married a dog and from their offspring other races were given to the world. The following legend relates this:

There was once upon a time a girl who refused every husband that offered; at last her father grew angry with her and threatened that she should marry his dog. Now it is said that the dung of a dog had been changed into a man, and was inside the house, when the father threatened his daughter to give her to his dog. And it happened that the dung in human form burst out—

“Let me get out, I am thawing!” You see, it could only live as long as it remained frozen. And so it went out and gossiped to the dog. The dog, who by then felt inclined for love, broke inside, tore the girl’s clothes; and clung fast to her, as is the habit of dogs; and then it dragged her outside the house after it. The girl, who was afraid of the dog, crawled up on a large whale bone and there she fell asleep; but the dog gnawed the bone through, so that the girl fell down, and then he played with her again.

The father, who was now sorry for his daughter, rowed her out to a little island; and it is that island over there, near Kangerdlugssuaq. But the dog he fastened to a large seal-skin, which he filled with large stones. Then the dog began to work magic spells, and swam with only his nose above water



KNUD RASMUSSEN (NOVEMBER 1903)



to the island, dragging all the stones after him. And over on the island he lived with the girl. The father, who was sorry for her, brought her food.

At last the girl became pregnant, and gave birth to ten children: two dogs, two *erqigdlit* (dogs with men's heads), two Eskimos, two *qavdlunât* (white men), and two *qavdlunâtsait* (white men of warlike disposition).

The white men she put in the sole of a boot and sent out to sea; and then they sailed to the white men's country and became their forefathers. If you look at a ship's hull from above, it is just like the sole of a kamik.

But the girl, who was enraged with her father for having made her take his dog for a husband, had him torn to pieces by her children.

Here ends this story.

On the island where the girl and the dog lived there is a grave in which there are human bones and the bones of a dog.

So the story must be true.

*Told by ARNAJÂQ.*

## THE SOUL

EVERY person consists of a soul, a body and a name.

They believe that a human being has a soul, or a spirit, which is immortal. The soul is outside the person, but follows it, as his shadow follows a man in the sunshine. Although the soul is thus not inside the body, the body and the soul are nevertheless inseparable as long as a person is to continue alive ; for when the soul leaves the body, the body pines away and dies.

Only great magicians can see the soul. They say that it looks exactly like a person, only that it is smaller. Consequently a man's soul can be stolen by a magician, who can bury it in the snow ; the hole in the snow must be covered with the fleshy side of a dog's skin. And then the person will inevitably die, unless another magician, favourably inclined to him or her, can find the soul that has been stolen and bring it back to the body.

After the death of the body, the soul ascends into heaven or goes down into the sea. It is good to be in either place.

To a question as to what the soul is to a man, Majaq, from Cape York, replied : "The soul is what makes you beautiful, makes you a man. It is that alone that makes you will, act and be busy. It is what directs your whole life ; and therefore the body must needs collapse when the soul leaves it.

"There was once upon a time a man whom nobody could kill. His compatriots tried to kill him, but his soul merely changed its habitation ; it had itself born into all living creatures, the animals in the sea, and the animals in the hills. And there it learned much that men had not known before. It was with the souls of the dead, too ; they had animals to hunt in abundance, but they lived in the dark.

“When the soul had passed through all animals, it became a man again and taught others what it had seen.”

The story in its entirety is as follows :—

### THE SOUL THAT ROAMED THROUGH ALL ANIMALS

They tell, of a man whose name was Avuvang, that he was invulnerable. His home was Kangerdlugssuaq.

At the time of year when it is delightful to be out, when the days do not end in dark nights, and everything outside is drawing to the height of summer, Avuvang's brother was standing one day on the ice, by a seal's breathing-hole.

And as he stood there, a sledge came towards him ; and when it had come up to him, the man on the sledge said—

“There will come many sledges to kill your brother!”

The brother hurried in to the houses and told what he had heard, and then he ran up to a steep rock and hid himself.

The sledges drove up to the houses, and Avuvang went out to meet them ; but he took with him the skin of a dog's neck, which he had worn as a child for a cloth. Then, as the men drove straight towards him, he stood on his old cloth ; and his enemies fell upon him and struck at him. But behold ! no weapon could pierce the man !

At last he spoke, and said mockingly—

“My body is now like a piece of wood, full of knots ; they are the scars of your knife-thrusts ; but none of them have brought me death !”

As they could not get the better of him, they took him up to a high rock, to throw him down ; but every time they seized him to throw him down, he changed himself into a man who was not one of their enemies ; and at last the sledges had to drive away without having carried out their purpose.

It is related of Avuvang that he took it into his head to go south, to the people who lived there, to buy wood. That was the custom at that time, very long ago ; now they do it no more.

Several sledges travelled south together to buy wood, and



when they had accomplished their purpose they journeyed back again. On the way they made a halt to look for seals' breathing-holes; and while the men were occupied in this way, the women went on in front. Avuvang had taken a wife, on his journey to the hunters in the south.

As the men stood there, looking for breathing-holes, they all took it into their heads that they would like Avuvang's wife, and so they tried to kill him. Qauvtâq stabbed him in the eye, and the others seized him and pushed him down into the sea, through a breathing-hole. When his wife saw it, she was angry, and she took the wood the men had just bargained for and broke it all into small pieces. She was distressed at having been made a widow.

When she had spoilt the men's wood she went home. But the sledges drove on.

All at once a seal rose up ahead of them, as they advanced along the thin, slippery ice, and the sledges drove after it, but many fell through and were drowned in that chase. Later on they noticed a fox in their path and set off after it too; but, in pursuing it, they drove at a furious pace up an elevation in the ice, fell down the other side, and were killed. Only a few men were left to reach Cape York and tell what had befallen them.

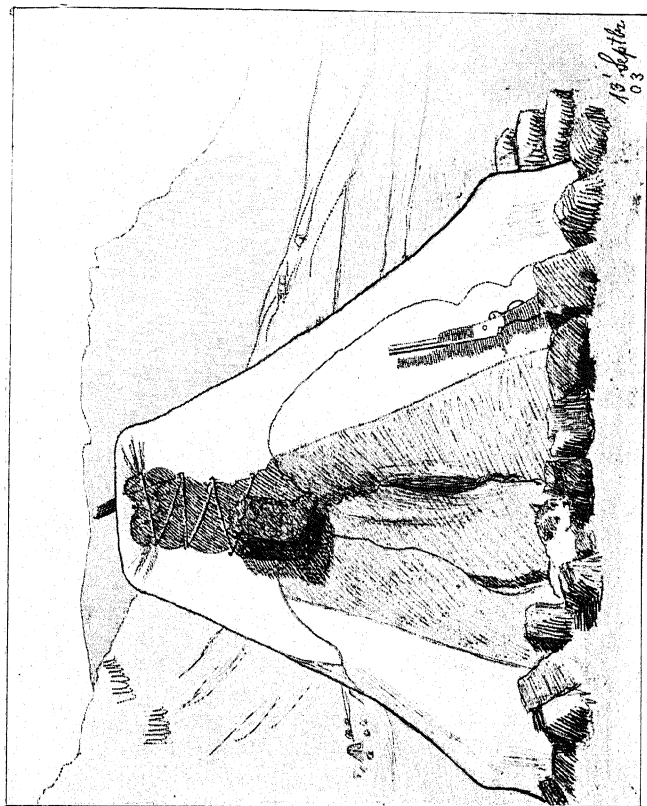
It was the soul of the invulnerable Avuvang that had changed itself, first into a seal and then into a fox, and thus brought destruction on his enemies. After that, he determined to be born into all the animals in the world, that one day he might tell men what his experiences had been.

Once he was a dog; then he lived on the meat he stole from the huts.

But Avuvang soon grew tired of being a dog; there were too many beatings in that existence; and so he decided to be a reindeer.

At first he had great difficulty in keeping up with the other reindeer.

"How do you stretch your hind-legs when you gallop?" he asked one day.



A TENT



"Kick towards the outer edge of the heavens," said the others. He did so, and he was able to keep up with them at once. But neither did he know, at first, what to eat, and he appealed to his comrades once more.

"Eat moss and lichen," said they.

Then he soon grew plump and had a thick roll of fat down his back.

But one day the flock was attacked by a wolf, and the reindeer rushed into the sea, and in their flight they swam up to some kayaks; and one of the men killed Avuvang.

He flayed him and cut him up, and laid his flesh in a heap of stones. So there he remained, and when winter came, he was very anxious that they should come and fetch him. He was delighted one day to hear the stones above him rattling down; and when they began to eat him and to crush his bones with stones, to eat the marrow, Avuvang escaped and changed himself into a wolf.

So then he lived as a wolf; but it was the same thing with him as it had been before, he could not keep up with his comrades, when running.

And they ate all the food.

"Kick up towards heaven!" they told him, and he was immediately able to overtake any reindeer and to procure himself plenty of food.

Later he became a walrus, but he could not dive down to the bottom of the sea; he only swam along through the water.

"Push off with your feet towards the middle of the sky; that is what we do when we want to go down!" And he struck his hind-legs up to the sky, and reached the bottom. His comrades then taught him what to eat—mussels, shell-fish, and small, bright stones.

Once, too, he was a raven. "Ravens never want for food," said he, "but they suffer from cold in the feet."

Thus he went through all the animals, and at last he became a seal again. He used to lie down under the ice and watch the men who wanted to catch him. As he was a great magician, he could hide himself under a man's great toe-nail!

But one day there was a man seal-hunting who had cut off the nail of his great toe, and that man harpooned him. Then he hauled him up on the ice and dragged him home.

Inside the house they began to flay him and cut him up. Then, as the man flung his mittens up to his wife, Avuvang went with them and crept inside the woman, and in this way Avuvang was born a man again.

*Told by OSARQAQ.*

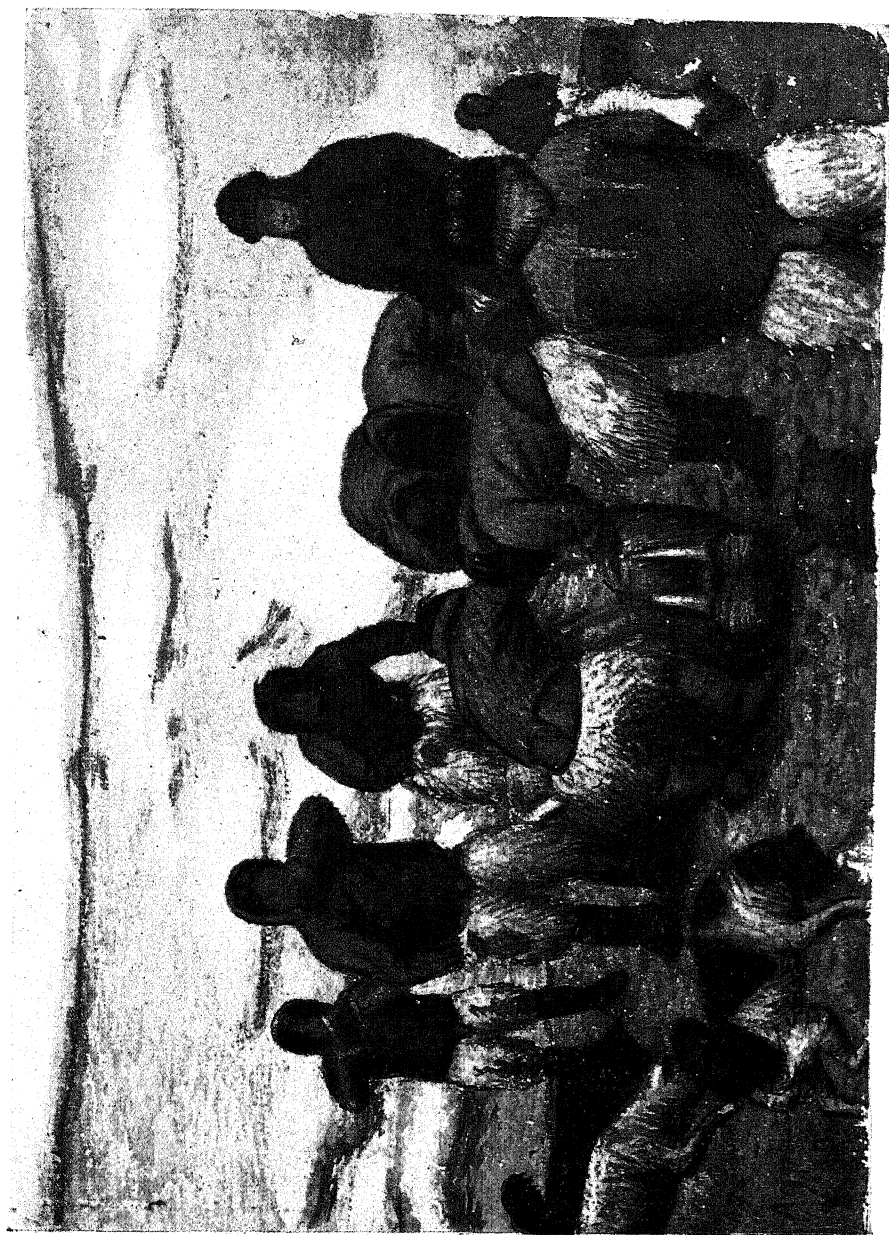
A person's illness and death are always caused by the loss of the soul. But, as remarked above, a stolen soul can be re-acquired by a magician. An old woman, Nivigkana, told me of a soul-flight that she had taken down below the earth to the dead, to save the life of a sick fellow-villager.

Through a narrow opening in the ground her soul had gone down into the nether world. Her body, in the meantime, lay lifeless in the house. It was a woman of the name of Angîna that she wished to help. The way to the under world led down a ravine, down which poured a great waterfall. She followed the ravine a long, long way. Down under the earth it widened out suddenly, and she found herself in a country with a thick, dark-blue sky over her. It was not light there, as it is up here; the sun was smaller and paler than the sun on earth, and it seemed to derive its light from above. It was winter there, but there was no snow; it never snowed. Ice lay over the sea, and when she walked on it she saw three men, pushing their sledges along the smooth surface; they had no dogs. She recognised her deceased brother at once.

"Qajûtaq," interposed Kale, in explanation. (Nivigkana may not say the name of the dead man herself.)

And the brother called her to him. The two others were named Pauluna, a man she knew quite well, and Aleqatsiaq; this latter, on the contrary, she did not know, as he was from Akilineq, the country on the other side of the sea.

They told her that it was very pleasant down there. There were plenty of seals, walruses and narwhals. They invited her to go with them to a brook where there were a great





many salmon ; and she went with them. But when she had walked with them some distance out on the ice, the brother began to point up to the ravine down which she had come.

"You must turn back now, unless you wish to remain down here!" he whispered in her ear. And when the two others saw that he wanted her to go up again to men they did all they could to hold her back.

Then suddenly she caught sight of the soul of sick Angîna on the shore, and she went after it, seized hold of it, and started on her way up the ravine, back to men and women.

This was how she won back the soul of Angîna, who soon after recovered from her illness.

But it is not only men who have souls, animals have them too. The most dangerous of all animal souls is that of the bear.

Concerning this an Eskimo relates :—

The bear is a dangerous animal, but we need him. We may hunt him and kill him, but if we do, we have to take certain precautions, that the soul may not come back and avenge itself.

Bears know everything and hear everything that people say. When the bear-hunter returns from the chase, the flayed skin is brought into the house and laid in a qimerfik (a box for dog's food).

If it is a he-bear, they hang over the snout a hunter's thong, a harpoon point and a harpoon, a little blubber and meat, and a few shreds of skin, all of them an offering to the dead bear. The fragments of skin are intended to patch his boots ; bears walk so much. If it is a she-bear, they merely hang up a piece of the dressed skin of a seal over the skin, a little meat, and a few bits of skin to patch with.

It is kept hanging like this for five days.

Further, all the bones are collected as the meat is eaten, and laid in a heap by the side of the head on the window-sill. The head should be turned inwards.

This is done so that the soul of the bear shall not have



too much difficulty in getting home. It is furnished with men's equipments, because bears often assume human shape.

Thus, it is told how a woman, while out for a long walk, once came to a house she had never seen before and went inside. There was no one at home, but towards evening the people of the house came back, and they turned out to be bears in human shape. So she hurriedly hid herself by creeping behind the skin hangings. The bears came home, and she saw that one of them was carrying a hunting-thong and a harpoon, just as men do. When the bears had eaten, they went to bed, and the bear that had carried the same hunting implements as a man lay down just in front of the woman.

"It is strange how the skin hangings on the wall bulge out!" the bear said once. And the woman, who was afraid she would be discovered, strangled her child, which was going to begin to cry.

The bear with the hunting implements was the soul of a bear that had just been killed by a man, and the implements it was carrying were the very ones the hunter had hung up over its skin.

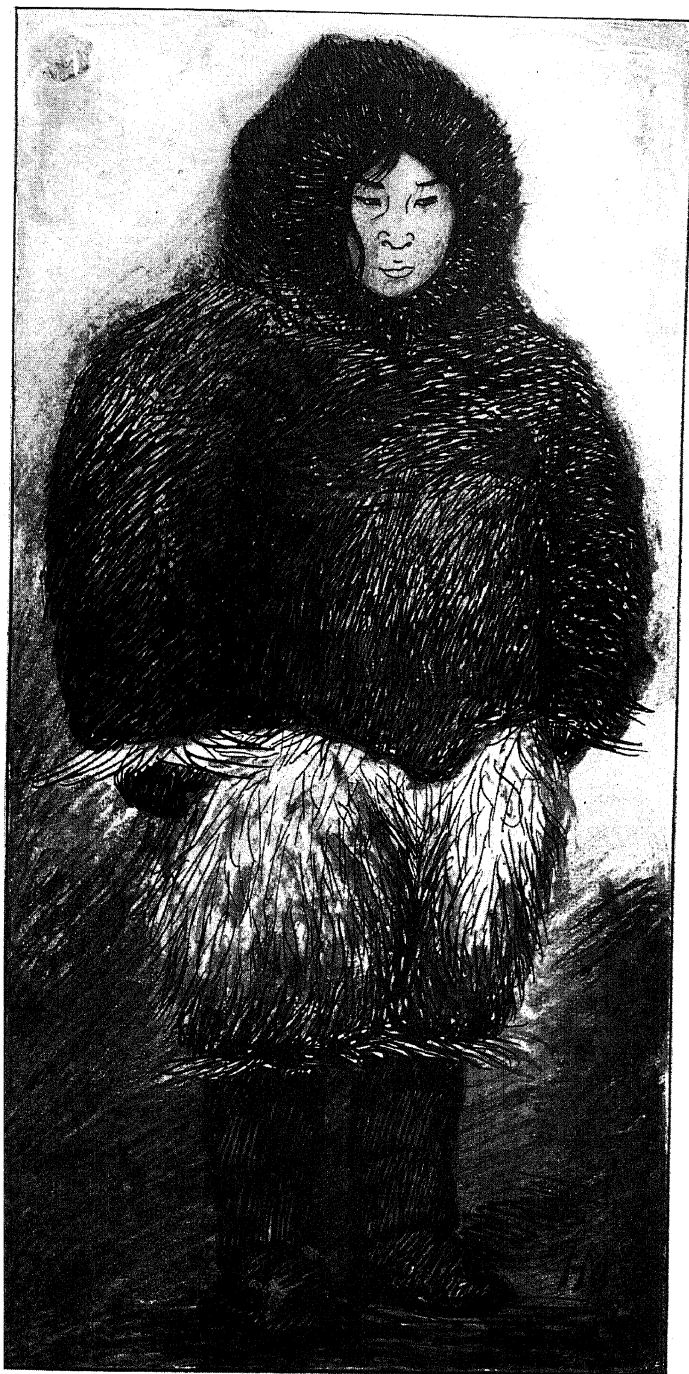
The woman could hear them talking about people, and they said—

"Yes, we cannot stand against them, for they bar the way for us with their dogs and they kill us with their arrows."

Next day, when the bears had gone out hunting, the woman fled home and told the others what she had heard and seen.

This happened long ago, in the days of our first forefathers, and that is how we know about the soul of the bears.

*Told by MAISANGUAQ.*



PANIGPAK'S SON



## THE BODY

THE instrument of the soul is the body, which is mortal. All misfortune and sickness that attack a man, attack the body; and after death the evil remains behind in the body. Consequently very great precautions must be taken when a body is placed under the stones, for burial.

The following rules must be observed after a death:—

When a person dies, the body must be buried as quickly as possible. Only the nearest relatives must have anything to do with it. Others are, as a rule, unwilling to subject themselves to the penalties incurred by the person who has handled a dead body. The corpse must be laid with his head towards the sunrise. He must be placed under a heap of stones, fully dressed, with all his implements. The soul continues to live, and might require them.

The body is laced up in skins, and dragged to the place where the cairn is to be erected.

For five days no one must cross the footprints of those who have dragged the body.

If the deceased is a man, his team of dogs is slain and the dead dogs are harnessed to his sledge, which is placed by the grave. (If, however, the dead person is a female, only one dog is killed.) This is done, that he may not be alone in his death.

The persons who have had to do with the corpse must remain quiet in tent or house for five days and nights. During these days they must not prepare their food themselves or cut up cooked meat for themselves. They must not take off their clothes at night, or pull back their fur hoods. When the five days have passed, they must wash their hands and bodies.

When the sun is once more in the same position in the heavens as at the time their relative died, they must throw away the clothes they wore at the time.

On the five days following upon the burial, at sunrise and sunset, they must go up together to the grave, and go once round it in the same direction as that of the sun's circuit of the heavens.

For five days and nights no one must drive over land where any one has died.

All hunting and other implements, sledges and kayaks, are carried down to the edge of the ice and placed so that they do not point towards the land. In the same way, things that are in process of being made are brought down to the ice. Everything must remain there for five days.

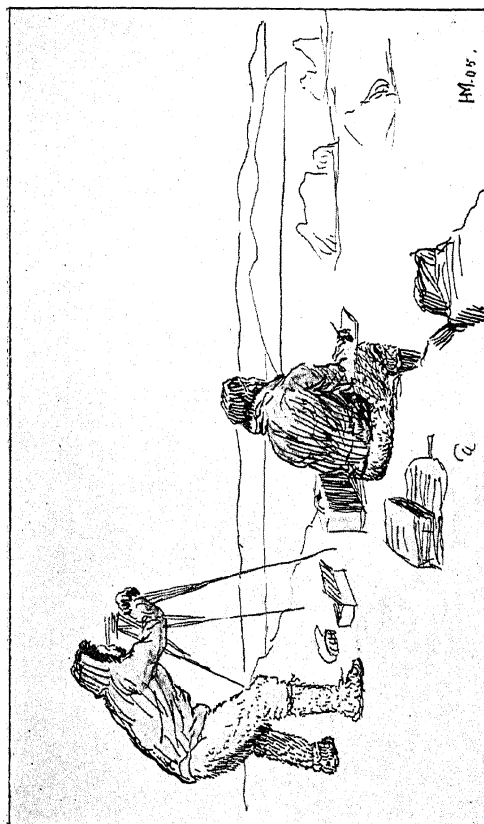
During this period of time, no work must be done. If, however, sewing is absolutely necessary, the eyebrows must first be blackened.

Men out driving must never disentangle the traces themselves when they have had to handle dead bodies. If obliged to go on a journey, they must always take with them a boy who can do what is forbidden to themselves. The first time they go out on the ice after a funeral ceremony, as they put their foot on the ice they must repeat a certain formula. In the same way they must repeat a formula when they enter a kayak for the first time.

For five days no hunting or fishing must be done from the village or dwelling where a death has taken place.

The left nostril is plugged with straw when any one dies; this is done to secure a long life. The nostril only remains plugged as long as the funeral ceremonies are going on.

Straw must not be plucked near a village where a death has occurred; for the earth is a living thing, and it would cause it pain if, shortly after a person's death, something of itself should be killed too. If, however, it be indispensably necessary to procure straw for kamiks, or for the sleeping-place, it must be gathered on ground separated from the village by a glacier.



OBSERVATIONS AND SKETCHING PROCEEDING



All these interdictions are respected out of fear of the dead man.

No one may take anything that has been placed by a grave. If, however, one does so, he must place in the grave some compensation to the dead man's soul. You can pay with hunting or fishing implements, or with meat or blubber; but everything must be in miniature. If you take a kayak, you must place a tiny model in the place of it; if you take a harpoon, it must be replaced by the model of a harpoon; if you intend to pay with meat, the piece need not be larger than a finger's length, for the soul can magnify it for itself.



## THE NAME

ORIGINALLY the Eskimos regarded the name as a kind of soul, with which was associated a certain amount of vitality and dexterity. The man who was named after one deceased, inherited the qualities of his name; and it was said that the dead man had no peace, and that his soul could not pass to the land of the departed, before his name had been given again.

Connected with this idea is the dread of mentioning a dead person by name before his name has been given again. If one did so, the name might easily lose some of its force.

After the death of the body, the name takes up its abode in a woman who is about to bear a child, and it keeps her pure internally as long as her condition lasts. It is born with the child at the same time as the child.

The child cries at birth : *ategarumavdlune*, because it wants its name. But an ordinary person cannot decide upon it; a magician, or a "wise woman" (*ilisitsaq*<sup>1</sup>) must be appealed to, and his or her helping spirits say what the child's name is to be.

This view was upheld by the before-mentioned Nivigkana, the woman who had been to the country of the dead. But the greater number of her compatriots now declare the belief antiquated. Majaq, a young sceptic, defined it as follows :—

"One person must be distinguished from another, and as a mark of distinction, we give our children names. It pleases people to see their dear deceased ones live again in name; that is why we take the names of the dead for our children."

He, consequently, does not believe that the name is a soul. And all young people hold the same opinion as he.

But, as old Aisivak once said, when a young fellow shot a gull from a village where there lay a person who had just died : "Ah! the young people believe nothing and reverence nothing, as long as they are well and have food in plenty!"

<sup>1</sup> The word *ilisitsaq* is never used, for either sex, as suggesting a *benignant* influence.—G. H.



KNUD RASMUSSEN, WEARING ESKIMO HAIR-FILLET



## L I F E

THE harsh natural conditions which render the existence of the Polar Eskimos a never-ending struggle, quickly teach them to view life from its practical side: in order to live, I need, first and foremost, food. And as he is so fortunately situated that his manner of obtaining his food—by hunting—is at the same time his passion, the years glide by for him free from care. He does not count the days, he keeps no record of time. He is born with the qualities he needs in order to gain his living, the school which teaches him dexterity is his childhood's play.

When the young Eskimo grows into a man—and that happens the day it dawns upon him that his childish play can be taken in earnest; that he might just as well close with a real bear as with the carved blocks of ice he used to play with; that he might just as well steal up to a real seal as to a make-believe one—he is filled with only one desire: to be equal to the others, the best of them; and this becomes his life's ambition.

All his thoughts are thus centred on hunting expeditions, seal-catching, fishing, food. Beyond this, thought is as a rule associated with care.

Once, out hunting, I asked an Eskimo who seemed to be plunged in reflection, "What are you standing there thinking about?"

He laughed at my question, and said: "Oh! it is only you white men who go in so much for thinking; up here we only think of our flesh-pits and of whether we have enough or not for the long Dark of the winter. If we have meat enough, then there is no need to think. I have meat and to spare!"

I saw that I had insulted him by crediting him with thought.

On another occasion I asked an unusually intelligent

Eskimo, Panigpak, who had taken part in Peary's last<sup>1</sup> North Polar Expedition—

"Tell me, what do you suppose was the object of all your exertions? What did you think when you saw the land disappear behind you, and you found yourself out on drifting ice-floes?"

"Think?" said Panigpak, astonished, "I did not need to think: Peary did that!"

During the year that I spent among the Polar Eskimos, there was comfort and plenty everywhere, and, so far as I could ascertain, this was the usual state of affairs.

Thus, what they ask of life, they receive, and their requirements being satisfied, an irresponsible happiness at merely being alive finds expression in their actions and conversation. They have all sorts of sudden impulses, and are free to follow them up unchecked. They are now here, now there, incalculable in their whims; now on dangerous and arduous hunting or sealing expeditions, now at jovial entertainments.

They are always anxious to see happy people round them, to hear laughter in their homes, and are touchingly grateful for a jest or joke.

The meal is of course the central point of every gathering, and the demands made on one's receptive capacity are by no means small.

I once excused myself, when paying a visit, with the plea that I had already eaten and had had enough. I was laughed at, and the answer I received was—

"There thou wast talking like a dog! Dogs can be stuffed till they are satisfied and can eat no more; but people—people can always eat!"

<sup>1</sup> It is Peary's 1898-1902 Expedition that is here alluded to.—G. H.



KAYAKS TOWING A WALRUS HOME, IN A SNOWSTORM



## DEATH

BUT one fine day these happy people are visited by a disease that demands its victims. Death shows itself suddenly among them, inexorable, final. And they are seized with terror at the mystery, perdlugssuaq, the evil fate, which none can escape. And perplexity arises among the unprepared ones, who have looked on death. And, as though in a despairing attempt to escape the inevitable, they draw up a code of rules of life to be followed by those who do not wish to die.

Thus, there are traditional rules to be observed by children, by young people, by women in childbirth, by women who have had a miscarriage and by their husbands.

The latter rules are of special importance owing to the frequency of miscarriages, which are, perhaps, the result of too early marriages, and threaten the existence of the whole race.

It is no easy matter to fathom the meaning of these various customs. The Eskimos themselves do not understand them, and it is no use to catechise them as to what rules they would observe in given cases. They have no theories, but in practice they cling in a purely instinctive manner to all the old traditions; it is only by living with them and by watching, that one gains an impression of the moral teaching which "the experience of their forefathers," as they say themselves, has bequeathed to them.

At childbirth the following rules must be observed:—

When a woman is about to give birth to a child, she must move out of the house that she inhabits with her husband. If it be summer-time, a little tent is erected for her; if winter, a snow-hut is built. As soon as the birth is over, she is at liberty to go back.



The day her child is born she must only eat "Serâlatag," meat fried in fat on a flat stone.

When she has slept a night after her confinement, she must begin to make herself new clothes; her old clothes must be thrown away.

After a birth she must wash herself from head to foot.

She must not push her hood back off her head outside, nor take off her mittens.

Before she has had five children, she must not eat young rough seals, eggs, entrails, heart, lungs, or liver.

Once a tiny baby began to talk as it was dying—"ûmatit, tartortiga, inaluaq, tinguk;" and, after it had spoken those words, it died. It was reproaching its mother with having eaten heart, kidneys, intestines and liver, and since then all mothers have refrained from these things.

The following rules must be observed by a woman who has had a miscarriage (and of course she is subject as well to the ordinary rules which apply to mothers):—

When she sees a sledge or a kayak, she must not, as is customary, call out to tell her compatriots; she must go quietly into her house. When a young woman under penance is seen to go into the house, people generally look out for returning hunters. If the return of the hunters is called out by a woman under penance, others who have not yet returned might easily meet with an accident and never come home again.

She must never name animals which are used for food; if she does, they might bring some misfortune upon the hunters.

Her husband must never talk to her of his hunting or fishing; if, after his arrival home, he wishes to mention dangerous animals to others, he must call them by other names. Thus *nanog*, a bear, must be called *ajagpagtoq*; *auveg*, a walrus, *sitdlalik*; *uksuk*, a bearded seal, *takissoq*. He must never use *serratit* (magic formulæ) to his prey.

Her husband must not eat the heart of any animal, nor the liver of any one else's catch, though he may of his own.

She must never eat away from home; if, while on a



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ESKIMO TYPES



journey, she spends the night away from the village, her husband must build her a snow-hut. She must not take off her clothes when sleeping in a snow-hut on the ice. She must, however, take off her kamiks or boots when she is going to eat—she must also do this at home. If she eats in a strange house, her food must be given to her on a separate dish, not on the one common to all. If she does not finish, what is left must be thrown to the dogs.

If she has no older children herself, she must take in a strange child as a help, for she must not do anything for herself. Thus, she may not cut the meat of a freshly caught animal; if the portion she has to eat is not cut up for her, she must bite it as it is. Only when the meat is from an animal caught the day before may she cut off her own share. She must never cut boiled meat from the pot. Only her nearest relatives may eat of the same boiling of meat as she. She must not fetch either snow or ice to melt for water. If she wishes to drink, some one else must pour her water out of the water-container. She must have her own drinking-vessel, which no one else must use.

She must not eat the flesh of bears, foxes or rough seals. If any undressed bear-skin or fox-skin happens to be in the house, she may not sew it. She must not in any case dress skins. If there is a freshly-caught fox in the house, and its nose has not been slit, she must have nothing to do with fire.

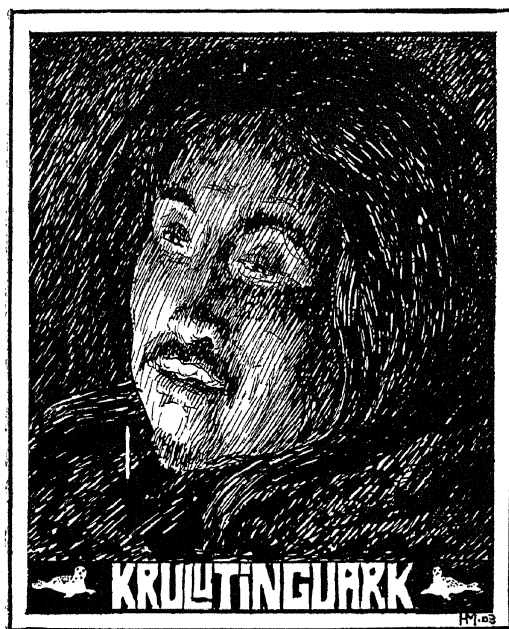
In the summer she may not dry her clothes in the tent, but must take them up to the hills and let them dry in the sun; her husband's clothes must be spread out to dry in the sun by others, but she is at liberty to hang them over the lamp-fire herself.

Only when the sun is once more in the same position in the heavens as when she suffered her miscarriage may she be released from these interdictions. — —

Children and young people must refrain from eating young rough seals, eggs, entrails, heart, lungs, liver, narwhals, and all small animals, such as hares and ptarmigan. A young man may only eat these things after he has captured at least one of

every animal that is hunted. Women, on the other hand, only after having given birth to five children.

Children and young people must always have their own drinking-vessels, preferably also their own cooking-pots. This latter, however, is not strictly observed. However, they may never eat meat that has been cooked in pots that have contained intestines, hearts, &c., that is to say, things they may not themselves eat.



QULUTINGUAQ, A WELL-KNOWN ESKIMO GUIDE



## RELIGIOUS BELIEFS

THESE rules, some of which are observed at birth, and others at death, are the moral foundation of the Eskimo mode of life, and form the nucleus of their religious ideas. These latter may be explained more clearly through the remarks of the Polar Eskimos themselves.

After a conversation with a Polar Eskimo on the Christian faith, I asked him, "But what do you believe?"

"We do not believe in any God, as you do," said he. "We do not all understand the hidden things, but we believe the people who say they do. We believe our *Angákut*, our magicians, and we believe them because we wish to live long, and because we do not want to expose ourselves to the danger of famine and starvation. We believe, in order to make our lives and our food secure. If we did not believe the magicians, the animals we hunt would make themselves invisible to us; if we did not follow their advice, we should fall ill and die."

A little episode that occurred during the winter will illustrate this.

We had taken into our tent a young fellow whose parents had recently died. We had taken him in, partly because he had no home, and partly because we thought we should get some help from him in our household. But it was very soon to be seen that it was we who had to wait upon him in everything. One day that some one was wanted to fetch ice to melt, our Greenlandic companion, Jörgen Brönlund, had, without our knowledge, told him to do it. He might well let his old traditions slide for one day, thought Jörgen. And so Agpalinguaq (that was his name) had fetched the ice.

He was seen, however, by some old women, and they were very much concerned about this breach of rule.



Something would happen, they declared.

And it did,—a few days afterwards, a south-west gale rose, and the swell was so violent that the waves broke far inland and destroyed every house in the village.

The result was that one of the leading men in the tribe came to us and begged us not again to cause the old customs to be contravened.

And he explained to me—

“We observe our old customs, *in order to hold the world up, for the powers must not be offended.*”

(I have translated the word *sila* the first time as “world” and the next as “powers.” The sentence in Eskimo runs: *Sila najúmiúdlugo, sila ajuatdlangnertórssúngmat. Sila* means not only “the whole,” “the universe,” but likewise the “individual powers or forces of Nature,” for instance in the sentence, *Sitdlardlugpagssualeqimioq*—Bad weather has come on.)

“We observe our customs, *in order to hold each other up; we are afraid of the great Evil, perdlugssuaq. Men are so helpless in face of illness. The people here do penance, because the dead are strong in their vital sap, and boundless in their might.*”

“If we did not take these precautions,” say the Eskimos, “we believe that great masses of snow would slide down and destroy us, that snowstorms would lay us waste, that the sea would rise in violent waves while we are out in our kayaks, or that a flood would sweep our houses out into the sea.”

“If any one with a better teaching would come to us and demand that we believe his words, we would do so willingly, if we saw that his teaching was really better than ours, but then he must remain among us and lead us towards that which we do not know. Yes, tell us the right, and convince us that it is right, and we will believe you.”

A remark like this best proves how wavering their religious conceptions are.

*They are to them, not the only possible ones, but merely the best that they know, through the traditions of their forefathers.*



TONGIGUAQ, WIFE OF QULUTINGUAQ



Their religious opinions thus do not lead them to any sort of worship of the supernatural, but consist—if they are to be formulated in a creed—of a list of commandments and rules of conduct controlling their relations with unknown forces hostile to man.

## THE RECOIL OF THE ACTION ON THE DOER

THE Eskimo religion, as shown in the preceding, does not centre round any Divinity who is worshipped, but vents itself in a belief in Evil, in a dim perception of certain mystical powers who are easily offended and whose anger is dangerous.

Man would be overwhelmed by the consideration he has to pay to the forces of Nature and by the rules governing his relations with these forces, were it not that he has the power, by forethought, to be the stronger, and, despite all, to control dangers. And this he does by himself taking the dreaded forces into his service.

For the magicians, who are the leaders of the people, can, by their arts and skill, make the powers who are masters of life and death subject to them, not by prayer but by command ; the supernatural thus becomes the magician's tool and man is to a certain extent master of his destiny.

Therefore the Eskimos say : We do not believe in any God as the white men do ; but we believe in our magicians, who understand the hidden things and have power over the destinies of men. If it should happen that an individual is the weaker, this is owing in reality, not to the inferiority of man, but only to the individual's lack of prudence and foresight. For he must, on some occasion or another, have neglected to observe one or another of the rules of conduct which are the conditions of his power.

Every man is at his birth endowed with a certain supply of vital force which is to be used up on earth. When this supply is exhausted the person grows old and, by death, passes over into another existence. In such a case no magician endeavours

to retain life in the invalid, for he is "worn out," and it is better that he should die.

Death plays an important part in all their traditional rules of conduct, but in daily life the idea of it troubles the Eskimos very little. They bestow scant thought on their own destiny, beyond providing themselves with food for the winter. You hardly ever hear fear of death mentioned, neither does a story-teller dwell upon the description of dangers or great misfortunes.

A wise and independent thinking Eskimo, Otaq the magician, said to me of death—

"You ask, but I know nothing of death; I am only acquainted with life. I can only say what I believe: either death is the end of life, or else it is the transition into another mode of life. In neither case is there anything to fear. Nevertheless, I do not want to die, because I consider that it is good to live!"

This calm way of envisaging death is not unusual; I have seen many pagan Eskimos go to meet certain death without a trace of fear. And they believe it is right to take one's own life, "when it becomes heavier than death."

That which, on the other hand, causes them to fence themselves round with so many curious rules is an indefinite dread of the uncertainty of life, the capriciousness of fate, and, bound up with this, a feeling of insecurity with regard to the torments and horrors that can lead to death. It is not death itself, but that which causes death, that they would shun. Akin to this is their fear of the souls of the dead, which can be angered by the acts of the living and can punish men by sending failure of the fishery (and hunting) or painful illnesses.

These various reasons impel them to purely mechanical observance of their numerous rules, the underlying meaning of which they often do not understand at all. But if they do not obey the commands of their fathers, then men incur danger of being visited by the "recoil of their own actions," or Nemesis.

If a young woman who has just had a child departs from

the prescribed diet, or any other ordinance connected with her child's birth, "this transgression recoils as a punishment" either upon herself or upon the child.

If a woman keeps her miscarriage secret, to avoid the severe penance entailed, she may either fall ill herself, or she may plunge her compatriots into misfortune, through failure of the fishery, or some assault of the forces of Nature. This is the punishment of disobedience, this is Nemesis; nothing escapes the watchfulness of the all-seeing Powers.

A remarkable outcome of this belief in Nemesis is the punishment that overtakes a murderer. The soul of the dead man avenges itself by frightening his murderer to death.

The following legends were related to me as instances of the "recoil of an action on the doer."

#### PAPIK, WHO MURDERED HIS BROTHER-IN-LAW

There was once upon a time a man whose name was Papik; he used to go seal-catching with his brother-in-law, Ailaq. But it happened with these two that Ailaq always brought home seals, while Papik always returned empty-handed. So each day his envy grew.

Then one day Ailaq did not come back, and Papik had no word to say on his return home.

At last, late in the evening, the old woman who was Ailaq's mother rose and spoke—

"Thou hast killed Ailaq!"

"No! I did not kill him," replied Papik.

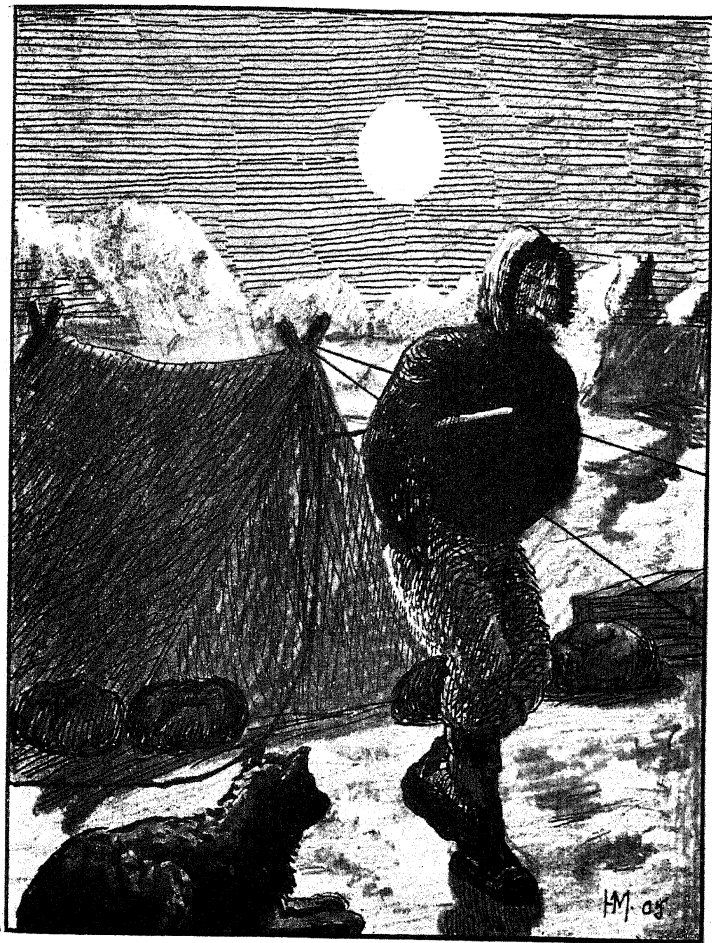
"Thou hast killed Ailaq!" she repeated, with raised voice.

"No! I did not kill him."

Then the old woman stood up and called out—

"Thou hast kept thy murder secret. The day shall come when I will eat thee alive; for it was *thou* who killedst Ailaq!"

The old woman then prepared herself to die; for it was as a revenant that she meant to revenge Ailaq. She drew her



VERY COLD ON GUARD





bear-skin rug over herself and sat down on the beach near the tideway and let the flood rise over her.

For a long time after that Papik did not go hunting, for he was afraid of the old woman's threat ; but at last he ceased to think of it and went seal-hunting as usual.

One morning, two men stood on the ice by the side of a seal's breathing-hole ; a little way off, Papik had selected a place by himself. Yes, and then it happened : they heard a crackling in the snow, in Papik's direction, and a fog fell over the ice. Soon they heard the shrieks of a man who is terrified : the monster had attacked Papik.

Then they fled in towards land in a wide circle, met on their way the sledges that were going out seal-catching, flung out their baggage, and persuaded them to turn back to the village, that they might not be frightened to death. In the village they all gathered together into one house. But when they heard the monster approaching on the ice outside they rushed to the entrance ; and as they were all crowding out at the same time, there was a great panic in the house, and in the confusion an orphan boy got a push, so that he fell backwards, in a tub filled with blood. When he got outside again, the blood poured down from him, and everywhere he went he left a red mark in the snow.

"We shall certainly be food for the monster, now that the silly boy is marking our path with blood !" they called out.

"Let us kill him !" one proposed, but the others had compassion on the boy and let him live.

The evil spirit then came into view on the ice ; they could only see its ears over the hummocks of ice as it crept along the ice-foot. When it got up to the houses, not a single dog barked at it, not one dared to attack it, for it was not a real bear. But an old woman spoke to the dogs—

"See, your cousin has come ; bark at him !"

And this released the dogs from their enchantment and they surrounded the bear, and when the men saw that, they harpooned it.

But when they came to flay and cut up the bear, they

recognised the old woman's rug in its skin, and its bones were human bones.

The sledges then drove out to fetch the belongings they had left on the ice, and they found everything rent, and when they discovered Papik, he was torn all to pieces. His eyes, his nose, his ears, his mouth, his vitals were all torn away, and he had been scalped (*magssiteqalugo*).

And that is how the old woman avenged her son Ailaq.

So that our fathers used to say, when any one killed a fellow-creature without reason, a monster would attack him, frighten him to death, and not leave a limb of his corpse whole.

The old people could not bear for men to kill each other.

I heard this story from the people who came to us from the other side of the sea.

*Told by INALUK.*

### PAUTUSÔRSSUAQ, WHO MURDERED HIS UNCLE

There lived at Kûkat a woman who was very beautiful; she was the wife of Alattaq. In the same village lived Pautusôrssuaq, who was Alattaq's nephew. He too was married, but he was fonder of his uncle's wife than of his own. The two therefore constantly exchanged wives, as people are in the habit of doing.

But one day late in the spring, Alattaq was about to start on a long seal-catching journey, and decided to take his wife with him. They were standing down by the ice and just getting ready for the start when the nephew came down to them.

"Are you going to leave us?" he asked.

"Yes, both of us!" replied Alattaq.

But when Pautusôrssuaq heard that, he rushed at his uncle and killed him; for they could not both have first right to the same woman.

When Pautusôrssuaq's wife saw it, she seized her sewing needle and thimble and fled away in the shadow of the tents,





up over the cliffs to Etâ, where her parents lived. She had not even time to put on her stockings, and so her feet grew very sore with running over the cliffs. On her way she saw people, inland, running about with loose hats on their heads, as the inland dwellers do; but as they ran away from her, she did not get into communication with them.

Near Etâ she caught sight of an old man, went up to him, and discovered that he was her father, out collecting Little Auks; and they went home happily together to his tent.

When Pautusôrssuaq had killed his uncle, he rushed up to his tent to murder the woman he was tired of; but she had fled already. Inside the tent sat a boy. He fell upon him and said—

“But where is she? Where has she run to?”

“I saw nothing, I was asleep!” lied the boy, for he was afraid; and so Pautusôrssuaq was obliged to give up the attempt to catch his wife.

So then he went down and took Alattaq’s woman as his wife, and lived with her. Soon she became a mother and gave birth to a monster with a large beard, and she was so frightened at it that she died. So he had no pleasure from the woman he had stolen. Things were to go ill with himself too.

In the early summer many people had assembled at Nat-silivik, on the way to Cape York; among these was likewise Pautusôrssuaq. One day a remarkable thing happened to him; out seal-catching, a fox set his teeth fast in the lappet of his fur-coat, and the man, thinking it an ordinary fox, struck at it, but could not hit it; later it turned out to be the soul of the murdered Alattaq, that had been playing with him a little, before tearing him to pieces. Alattaq’s amulet was a fox, you see.

A short time afterwards he was torn to pieces by Alattaq’s spirit, in the shape of a bear. His daughter, who happened to be outside just at that time, had heard the shrieks and had gone in to tell the others, but just as she got inside, she forgot what she wanted to say, because the avenging spirit had conjured forgetfulness upon her.

It was only later that she remembered, and then it was too

late. They found Pautusôrssuaq torn limb from limb ; he had tried to defend himself with great lumps of ice, they could see, but it had been of no avail.

That is how revenge comes upon people who murder.

*Told by OSARQAQ.*

### THE WIFE-CHANGERS

ONCE upon a time there were two men, Talîlarssuaq and Navssarssuaq, who exchanged wives. Talîlarssuaq was a malicious fellow, who was very fond of frightening people.

One evening, as he was lying by the side of the woman he had borrowed, he took his long knife and drove it into the skin lying on the sleeping-place ; then the woman ran away to her husband and said—

“Go in and kill Talîlarssuaq ! He is lying there pretending to be dangerous !”

So Navssarssuaq rose up and without saying a word dressed himself in his newest clothes, took his knife, and went out. He went straight to Talîlarssuaq, who was lying naked on the sleeping-place talking to himself, dragged him down on the floor, and stabbed him till he was half dead.

“You might at least have waited until I had got my trousers on,” said Talîlarssuaq. But Navssarssuaq dragged him out through the passage, flung him out on the dung-heap, and went his way in silence.

On the way he met his wife.

“Are you going to kill me too ?” she said ; she was angry at his having taken Talîlarssuaq’s wife.

“No !” he replied in a deep voice, “Pualuna is not big enough yet to do without you.”

Pualuna was their youngest son.

Some time after the murder, he began to notice that he was followed about by a spirit.

“It is an invisible something that sometimes catches hold of me,” he told the villagers : it was the avenging spirit keeping watch on him.



ALAQATSIAQ : BOY OF TEN





But it happened just about that time that many fell ill, and among them was Navssarssuaq. The sickness killed him, and so the avenging spirit had no opportunity of tearing him to pieces.

*Told by INALUK.*

## THE MAN WHO DID NOT PERFORM HIS PENANCE

There was once a man whose name was Artuk. He had just buried his dead wife under the stones, but refused to observe the penances that are imposed on those who have handled corpses. He did not believe in the precepts of his forefathers, he said.

Some of the people in the settlement were engaged in cutting up frozen meat for food; after he had been watching them for a little cut up the meat with knives, he took a stone axe, chopped the meat up, and said—

“Look, that is the way to chop meat.”

And he did this although, being a man who had touched a corpse, he was not allowed to cut meat.

The same day he went out on the ice and shook his under garment free of vermin, although he was forbidden to shake off vermin on the ice, when he had just been handling a dead body.

He also went up an ice-cliff<sup>1</sup> and drank water that had been melted by the sun, although he knew that it was forbidden to him.

He did all this to fling defiance at what his countrymen believed. It was all lies, he said.

But one day, as he was about to start out with his sledge, fear came upon him; he dared not drive on the ice alone, and as his son would not accompany him of his own free will, he bound him to the uprights of his sledge and took him with him that way.

He never returned alive from that drive.

<sup>1</sup> An ice-cliff is frozen fresh water, really an iceberg before it becomes detached. When the sun melts the surface into little pools, the drinking-water obtained from it is delicious.—G. H.

Late in the evening his daughter heard the mocking laughter of two spirits out in the air ; she understood at once that they were laughing so that she should know her father had paid the penalty of his transgressions.

The next day several sledges went out to look for Artuk. And they found him a long way out on the ice, torn to pieces, just as the spirits always do treat people who will not believe in the traditions of their fathers.

The son, who was fast bound to the sledge, they had not touched ; he had died of fright.

*Told by OSARQAQ.*

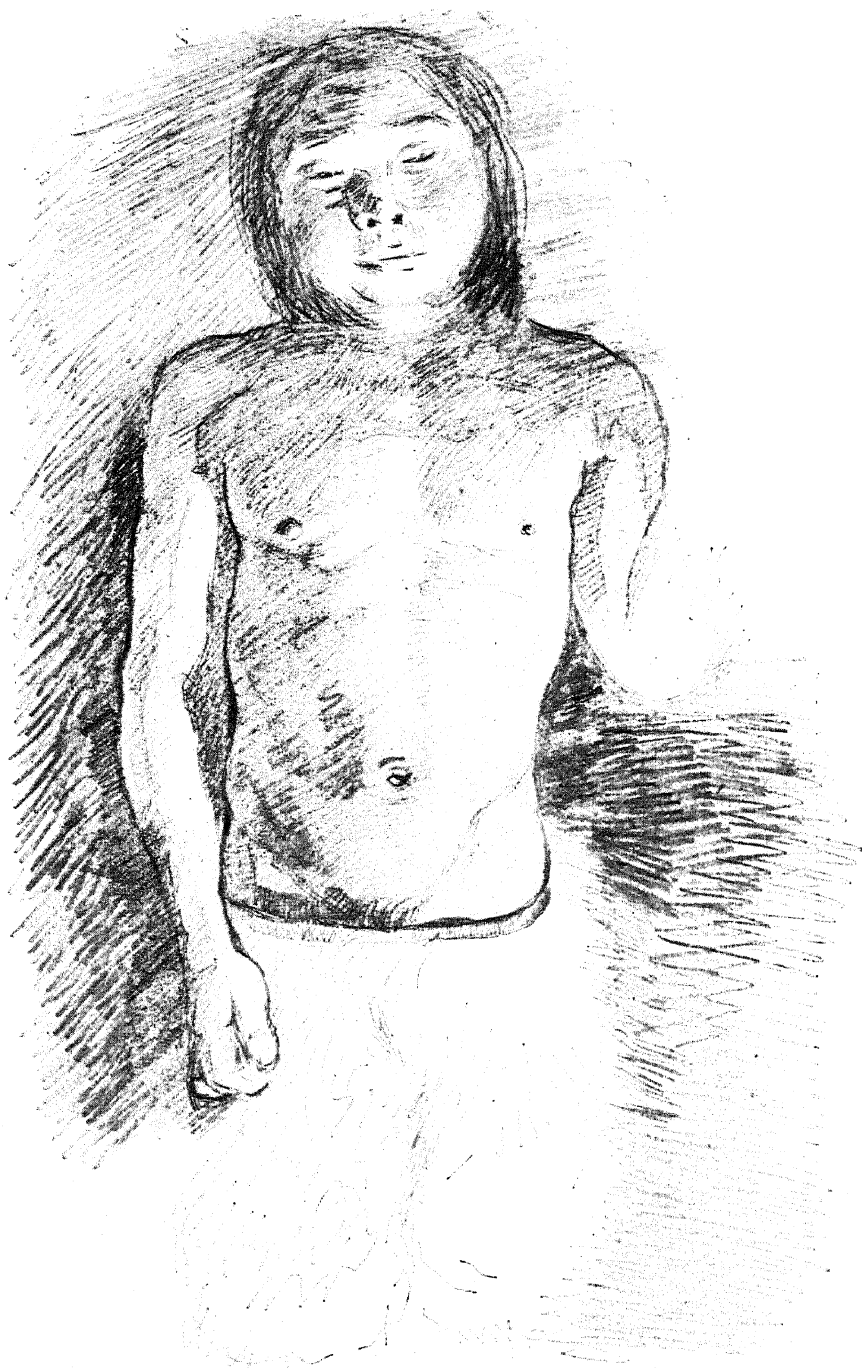
### BAD SPIRITS

The belief in “tôrnarssuit,” spirits hostile to men, is no longer universal among the Polar Eskimos. Most of them now demand to see or feel what they are to believe in, and do not cherish the dread of supernatural beings that former generations did.

When the dogs on a dark evening begin to bark or yelp outside the houses, they certainly say, even now, that something supernatural is frightening them ; when in the spring an avalanche plunges into the abyss, you can also hear old people mutter, “ A spirit is going about the hills.” But they do not take it in the same literal sense they used to do. Osarqaq the Eskimo, who does not himself believe in the existence of these spirits, explained to me :—

In the days of our forefathers there lived many strange beings whom we never see now. In those days everything had its spirit, the entrance passage, the draught-hole (ventilator) in the roof, the lamp, the door, the floor,—almost everything that had a name.

These spirits were as invisible as the human soul ; and their houses went straight down into the earth, so that no one could find them. They only allowed themselves to be seen by persons who were alone, and then their appearance and conversation were like a human being's. When you found their houses, a hole in the earth would be the entrance to them.



IMERARSUNGAQ, AN ESKIMÓ HOST AT HOME



### THE MIDDEN SPIRIT

I will begin by telling you of "Tutuatie," or the Midden Spirit. It could only be seen at night, and was always covered with filth; dried human dung clung to its hair. It lived in a house inside the midden.

One evening a little girl was playing with carved animals made of walrus tusks when the Midden Spirit came up to the window and called in to her: "Come out and come with me to Avigaq; but bring your toys with you!"

So the child went with him into his house. The spirit sat down and said kindly to the girl: "Come to me and let me pick the lice from you." But when the child placed her head in his lap, he thrust a needle through her ear and she died. And then he threw the body under the sleeping-place.

Another time the spirit enticed another little girl to him; but when the little girl was in his house, he discovered that she had very large boots and a very large coat on.

"Whose are the boots you have on?" he asked her.

"My father's," replied the girl.

"And the fur-coat?"

"My mother's."

"Then you must go home again," said the spirit to her, "for your parents will soon miss their clothes."

And so that time he did not kill the girl, because he thought it would be a pity to deprive her old parents of their clothes.

But before she went, he showed her, through the back of his sleeping-place, the body of the girl he had killed before.

When the girl got home, she told what she had heard and seen, and that was the origin of the story of the Midden Spirit.

### THE EARTH SPIRIT WHOM THE GIRLS TEASED

There was once a young girl, who went out with a little child that was not her own. She was accompanied by a comrade. On their rambles they came to a house and went inside. But hardly were they inside than a spirit showed himself in the doorway and prevented them going out again. He was a human

flesh eater ; and they were very much afraid, as they could not fly from him. One of the girls went into the back part of the house and began digging down in the turf to make a way out ; meanwhile the other girl stayed and engaged the spirit in conversation.

“ Now you will soon have tender flesh, nice fresh flesh ” (she was thinking that he would soon be eating them). “ But show us, too, that you can eat something hard. Bite the window stone there and let me see ! ”

The spirit, who was anxious to show that he could do everything, began to eat the stone, and while he was busy doing that, the other girl finished making the hole in the back wall of the house. Through this they both escaped to their village and told the others what had happened to them.

So the men fell upon the spirit, bound his legs together, and dragged him at a run along the ground, and afterwards they killed him.

#### THE CHILD-STEALER

There lives in the sea a monster called Qalutaligssuaq, which means : He with the Ladles. You often hear, from out at sea, a noise like ladles being struck together, and it is from that that he has received his name. He is much addicted to stealing children who scream.

Once a troop of children were playing down by the sea-shore, and the monster showed himself, attracted by their screams. The children fled off to the hills ; but one orphan child, who had no soles to his boots, could not run so fast over the stones, and dropped behind. When the monster was close to him, he flung himself down on the ground and began waving his legs about. Then he stuck his great toe right up in the monster's face, and wagging it backwards and forwards in front of the monster, he cried out—

“ Mind my big toe, it eats men ! ”

The monster was so frightened that he fled back to the sea at once.

Once upon a time a blind old woman went into a house with a child on her arm. The child cried, and called for its mother, and as the old woman could not get it to be quiet, she too



INETLIA, WIFE OF IMERARSUNGAQ





began to call for the mother. So somebody came in, and the blind woman, thinking it was the mother, gave up the child, but it was the Child-stealer who had it.

Later in the autumn, on calm days, people could see the little child playing on the floes, but no one could come near it, as it ran away from people. Then they made a lasso of seal-thongs, crept cautiously up to the child, and caught it in the lasso.

But the Child-stealer, who was grieved over the loss of the child, enchanted it, so that it fell ill and died.

It is likewise said that there is a spirit who comes and frightens people to death when orphan babies scream. There is also a risk of the dead mother herself coming back.

Once upon a time an orphan baby was allowed to scream, and no one tried to quiet it; then suddenly the dead mother appeared in the doorway and frightened them all to death.

### THE SPIRIT OF THE SKIN HANGINGS

A spirit which the old people likewise used to be very much afraid of was "The Spirit of the Skin Hangings."

(It is usual to hang the inside walls of houses with skins.) This spirit lived behind the skins, and when it saw a person lying asleep on the sleeping-place, would harpoon him.

Then, if you heard it cry "pinguivunga," that is, "The throw only grazed him," the person had nothing to fear; but if, on the contrary, it called out, "kitsoráupunga," that meant, "My line has broken," then the point of the harpoon had been embedded in the man, and he would pine away and die. You only noticed a slight smarting at first, but the pains would increase and cause death.

All the old people were very much afraid of this spirit.

Thus former generations relate what they saw and heard. I do not think that our forefathers would have wished to hand down idle lies to us who have come after them, and so I believe that these spirits did exist once, before we were born. But as I have never seen or known anything about them myself, I cannot say that these spirits are around us at the present time; for my tale shall be truth.

## PREVENTIVE MEASURES

### AMULETS

IN old legends it is often told how people in critical situations could transform themselves into animals and thus save their lives. And it was an amulet that gave man this power of transforming himself.

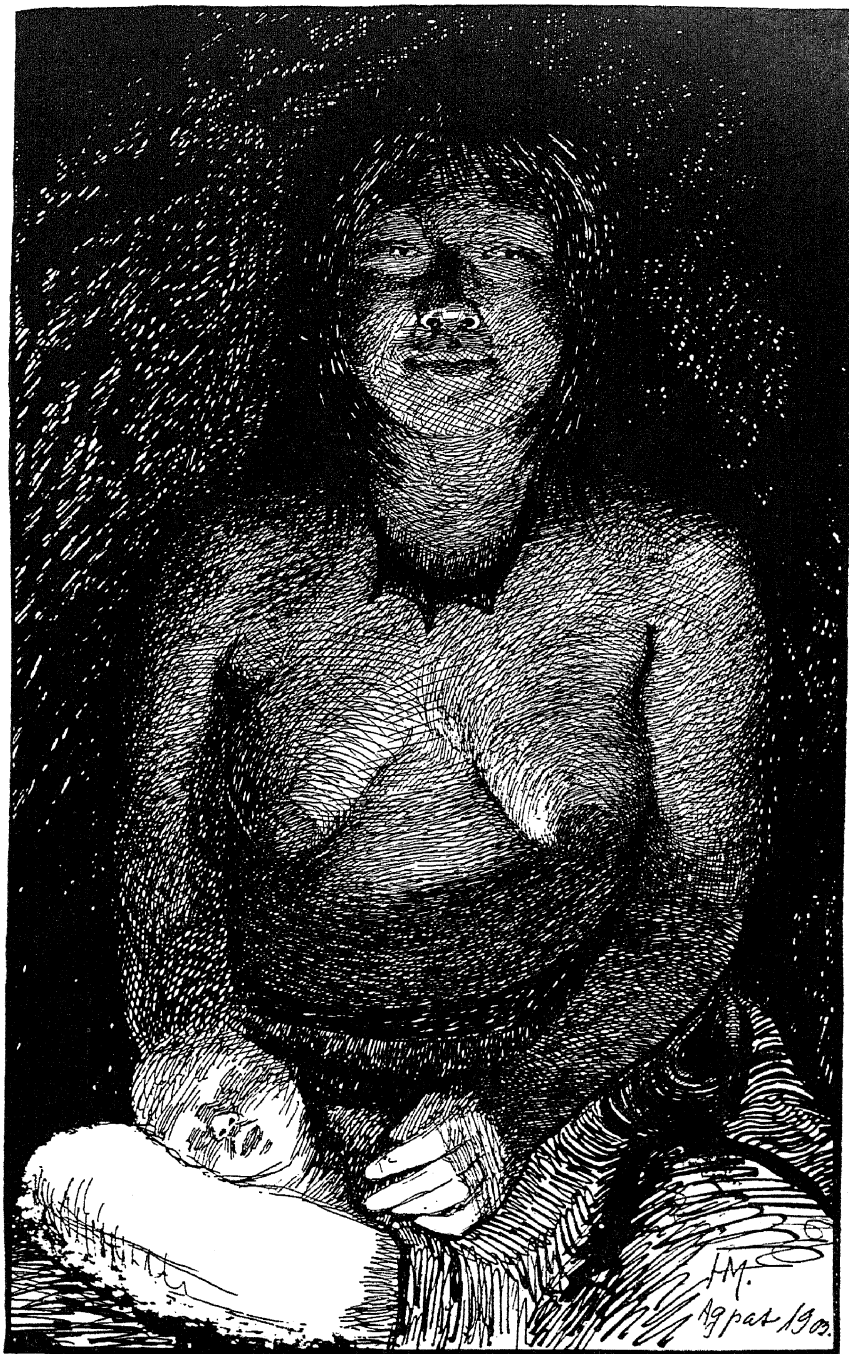
An amulet or "arnuaq" is a protector that an Eskimo carries about with him; it confers certain qualities on its possessor, and at the same time protects him from dangers.

It is usually only men who are provided with an arnuak, rarely women. Nor are all animals used indiscriminately. There are some that are used over and over again as amulets, but only certain parts of these. The bear is preferred to all others. When parents wish their children to be strong in the face of danger, they sew into the child's cap the skin from the roof of a bear's mouth. But this must never be cut from the head of a freshly-caught bear. It is only when an old cranium is found—or a dead bear that has not been killed by men—that it will have virtue as an amulet.

Hawks are, of all living animals, the surest slayers of their prey. So, if parents wish their son to become a great hunter or seal-catcher, they sew the head or the feet of a hawk into the boy's clothes; then he will manifest the qualities of the hawk in his own career.

Black guillemots are clever in catching Polar cod. What the Polar cod is to the black guillemot, white whales and narwhals are to men. Men who have a black guillemot's foot as an amulet will become great whalers or narwhal slayers.

The raven is satisfied with little. The man who has a raven's foot sewn into his garments will possess the virtues of the raven.



INETLIA WITH HER CHILD



The fox is cunning in the search of food and guards himself cleverly from his enemies. So, if a man has a piece of a fox's head, or a piece of old, dried dung sewn in his clothes, the cunning of the fox will pass into him.

In the same way a sparrow's skin, or a bit of a dog's bone, may be used as an amulet. But care must always be taken that the animals adopted as protectors have not been killed by men.

Women rarely have amulets; they spend the greater part of their time in the villages, and are not exposed to danger. However, some parents used to sew the head of a kittiwake into their daughters' clothes. The kittiwake lays very small eggs, and the women who wear it as an amulet will not give birth to large children.

A protector much in vogue among men and women is a small piece of an old hearth-stone; this is sewn in the clothes, or worn by women enclosed in a neck decoration of hairless seal-skin. Fire is the strongest thing known; the old hearth-stone has withstood fire for many generations, and so it must be still stronger than fire. The man or woman who wears it as an amulet will have a long life and be strong in misfortune.

Dogs, too, have amulets.

If a man wishes to have strong and fleet dogs, he hangs round the necks of his puppies a small stone that has fallen from a bird rock. This stone has been both fleet and strong in its flight, and the same qualities will be conferred on the dogs by the amulet.

Good fighting dogs are much esteemed, as they are useful in hunting bears.

If a Little Auk can be caught while fighting with another, and part of it sewn in a piece of skin fastened round the dog's neck, it will be fond of fighting.

If dogs are wanted to bark freely, and frighten away bad spirits, part of a urine bucket must be tied round their necks, for all bad spirits are afraid of urine.

The use of amulets is declining rapidly amongst the Polar Eskimos, and now only a very few have them.

## MAGIC FORMULÆ

Magic formulæ, "serratit," are "words dating from the earliest days, the days when men's vital sap was stronger, and tongues had 'tangeq' (*i.e.* power)."

How these formulæ first came into being, it is difficult to ascertain; however, I was told by one Eskimo that it was thought that "these combinations of words had been dreamt by old men, and afterwards acquired magic power in their mouths. New formulæ are never invented now; old men die nowadays before their tongues acquire power."

But the traditional "serratit" still pass from mouth to mouth. The old men are not eager to teach them, and the young ones know nothing of them; it is as they grow older that they ask to learn them, and then the teacher regards himself as the giver of a great gift.

The speaking of these formulæ or spells can charm away illness, danger, or failure of the fishery; but they must be taken cautiously on the tongue; if misused even once, they lose their power. After a man has spoken a "serrat," he must not take a knife in his hand for five days, and some one else must cut his meat for him.

After being with the oldest man in the tribe, Qilerneq, for a long time, I learnt some of his magic formulæ. He considered that he was making me a very precious gift by telling them to me. It was when my departure was close at hand, and he gave me the following reason for his concession:—

"Now I have grown fond of thee, and so I will give thee the best that an old man can give to a young one. Soon thou wilt be going away, and one can never tell when thou mightest have need of them."

## (1)

When a man is driving along slowly with a heavy load, and his life is in danger, he can accelerate his speed by magic, if he utters the following spell:—



PORTRAIT STUDY





avatarpai --- avatarpai  
 akorngane --- akorngane  
 ánapunga --- ánapunga !

(Hunting-bladder skin, hunting-bladder skin  
 between --- between  
 I found safety --- I found safety !)

This spell was used for the first time by “the dog who took the girl to wife.” The legend is quoted elsewhere.

As the father regretted having given his daughter to the dog, he took her away to an island and fastened the dog to the mainland by a large seal-skin which had been prepared as a hunting-bladder, filling the skin with stones. But the dog, who understood magic, spoke the formula given above, and then swam out to the island—dragging all the heavy stones after him. Thus, long ago, this “serrát” came into being, and it is used now by those who want to advance more quickly, in order to save their lives.

(2)

The following formula is used for the same purpose :—

hok --- hok !  
 umiarssuaq, qajarssuaq, ingerdlarvfit.  
 ersarssuagkit  
 qârsaqalugit !

Translation :—

Forward, forward  
 ship, kayak, sledge !  
 Thy large cheeks  
 Must thou smooth, that they grow light-running !

(3)

If the animals make themselves invisible, and there is failure of the fishery, the hunter must say the following :—

sûvdlunga --- sûvdlunga  
 aquísaunga --- aquísaunga ?  
 teriangniauvdlunga  
 aquísaunga !  
 avíngârssûvdlunga

aquísaunga !  
 amarûvdlunga  
 aquísaunga !  
 suniardlunga ?  
 anguniardlunga !

In translation, this is :—

In what shape  
 Shall I wait at the breathing-hole ?  
 In the skin of a fox  
 Will I wait at the breathing-hole !  
 In the skin of "the leaper"  
 Will I wait at the breathing-hole !  
 In the form of a wolf  
 Will I wait at the breathing-hole !  
 What do I want at the breathing-hole ?  
 To catch seals !

"The leaper" lived in the "days of our forefathers," in the days when every kind of animal was to be found on the earth ; it has its name from its skill in leaping. It is said that it used to hide between the stone walls of the houses. It could jump along the ceiling inside the houses, clinging to the stones : it had prehensile hands on both its fore and its hind legs, and these hands looked just like a man's. When it espied a man lying asleep on his back, it used to let itself down, and tickle him ; so that was why people were afraid of it. It was as large as a puppy. Now it is never seen.

(4)

The first time a man goes out to sea, after having buried a dead person, he is regarded as unclean ; animals will make themselves invisible to him. So, before he starts out, he must call upon "Nerrivik" ("The Food Dish"), a woman at the bottom of the sea, who rules over all sea creatures. The formula to be used runs as follows :—

akuarusiarssúp  
 savssuma atânit sikup  
 tune-enga !



PLAYING BEARS IN MELVILLE BAY



This sentence is of such irregular construction that it is untranslatable, but the meaning is supposed to be :—

Drive walrus towards me—  
Thou Food Dish down there  
Below the ice !  
Send me gifts !

The word *akuarusiarssûp* is a genitive form of *akungersortup*, but the meaning of it is quite wrenched from its proper connection. When two kayaks are hunting walrus together, they always separate, so that one is near the land, the other further out to sea ; the latter is called *akungersortog*, “the one who has the prey driven towards him,” because the walrus as a rule allows itself to be driven out to him ; *akungersorpog*, which comes from *akorpa*, seizes with the hands, gets, is used in this formula in a manner quite contrary to the custom of the language ; but then the words of the spell are not always supposed to be understood, say the Eskimos. It is the result of them that matters.

## (5)

As the person who has handled a corpse (“worked with a dead man”) is considered unclean, a formula is spoken after the burial (or “placing in the stones”) to prevent others being infected :—

erdlorssuaq !  
erdlorssuarpit serparpânga !  
erdlorssuarma serparpâtît.

This formula may also be used by a person who wishes to gather straw near a village where a person has died.

## (6)

When a man is creeping up to a seal, basking on the ice, he says the following, to prevent himself being seen :—

nunavdlo sermitdlo  
akorngákut  
támarnaunga !

Translated :—

Let me disappear  
Between the earth  
And the glacier !

(7)

amauralo ningioralo  
iserqungmanga  
iserpáka.

Translated :—

My great-grandmother and grandmother  
Bade me come in !  
And I came.

This will be said under a bird rock to prevent a stone avalanche. When anything so venerable as a grandmother or great-grandmother is mentioned, the stones will not be disturbed.

A man whose wife, by reason of child-birth or miscarriage, is under penance, must repeat a charm when he wishes to drink from a lake. People who have lost father or mother must likewise "speak over" the water in a lake, should they wish to drink away from home before a year has elapsed since the death.

The lakes run into the sea, which might easily be indignant at the "unclean" person disturbing the lake ; so the following words must be said :—

qingmersstúvdlunga  
sermivdlo nunavdlo  
akorngánit anivunga.  
imarssuaq savssuma,  
amarormalo ningiormalo  
imersingnarqungmanga  
imerpunga !

Translated :—

Like a dog  
Came I out  
From the space between the glacier and the land.  
Thou great sea down below !  
My great-grandmother and grandmother  
Said that I might drink freely,  
And now I drink !



A COOKING-HEARTH ON THE ICE IN MELVILLE BAY





All charm formulæ must be spoken softly, with lowered voice, and every word repeated.

The preventive measures mentioned both here and previously may be employed against the mysterious Powers of Evil by ordinary humans, that is to say, people who have not developed their mystic capacity and risen to be magicians.

All that has here been touched upon relates only to the little isolated tribe at Smith Sound, whom the expedition of which I formed part generally termed Polar Eskimos. Among other races in Greenland, amulets, or "charms against evil," have been used to a much greater extent than here. Old people in more southerly Greenland have told me that in addition to animals they made use of various kinds of stones, for instance, mica, and fragments of old men's clothes or property. In giving their children an amulet, parents would say over the child: "Thou shalt have a share of this man's vital force; accept thou therefore some of his property."

With the same motive an infant's mouth would be rubbed with the saliva of an old man, or his vermin be placed in its hair.

## MAGICIANS .

A MAGICIAN is a man who, by developing his faculties, has learnt to place himself in communication with one or several spirits, of whose supernatural powers he is enabled to make use ; he thus becomes the intermediary between men and the forces that interfere with human destinies.

It is not every one who can become a magician, for it is not every one whom the spirits will serve ; a special predisposition is necessary, and a sort of call. If a man, walking about alone, hears a sound which may emanate from a spirit, or sees a spirit in the flesh, he feels himself called to be an Angákoq (a subduer of spirits, a magician).

It is generally the best hunters who become magicians, men who are already in a position to command the respect of their fellows. For that matter, the magicians do not exercise any leadership, or exert any authority in the tribe, in an ordinary way, but only when danger of some sort threatens. In every village there is one, sometimes there are several Angákut. These men are very mysterious about their art, and usually turn off all questions with a jest. "Go out into the hills and learn it for yourself!" or "I have not the least idea how to call up spirits ; it is all lies and cheating!" are the replies you receive if you ask for information in the presence of others. But if you go off with one of them, preferably on a seal-catching expedition, and then win his confidence, he will not object to telling you about it—under strict promise of secrecy, of course—"for the crowd, who do not themselves understand the hidden things, are so incredulous and so ready to mock." Add to this the fact that the various magicians are often prone to decry each other, since each one, as will be readily understood, claims to be the only prophet. This is why they protect themselves against



OTAO, THE MAGICIAN



the incredulity of others by ironical statements. They know quite well that they will be able to open the eyes of the "sceptical" when misfortune or illness visits man and softens his heart. That is why young magicians always take advantage of a moment when their fellows are under the influence of alarm, to hold the first conjuration upon which their future and their whole position depend.

I will give, in the following, a magician's own account of how he acquired power over his helping spirits. The narrator is a man who has already been alluded to in the foregoing—Otaq. He was at that time about twenty-five years of age, and one of the best hunters in the tribe.

His self-revelation and Confession of Faith, which is a very good summing up of what an Angákoq is, is here given in literal translation :—

I wanted to become a magician, and go up to the hills, far into the hills and rocks, very far, and sleep up there. Up there I see two spirits, two there were, two great hill spirits, tall, as tall as a tent.

They sang drum-songs, they went on singing drum-songs, the two great hill spirits. I did not utter one word; I kept silence while they sang drum-songs; I was ashamed and did not dare to speak to them.

The day after I went home; and then I was a little of a magician, only a very little of a magician.

But to the many I said nothing of it; I was ashamed to speak of it, because I was still only a very little of a magician.

Another time I started out again on a little ramble in the hills, hare hunting, as I had felt a longing for hare's meat. A great rock I climbed up over, and when I came to the top I laid me down to sleep. I was not sleepy, but I just lay down.

I lie there a little, lie and hear again the song of the hill spirits; it was the two great ones whom I had heard the last time.

The one now begins to speak, speaks to me, asks me for a ladle of wood.

I only heard that they sang and that they spoke to me ; myself I said nothing.

When I came down to men, neither did I tell this time what I had seen. But I carved a ladle of wood, a very beautiful ladle of wood, with no dirt upon it.

The third time I heard the song of the hill spirits, I had not gone to the hills, that time it was in my house. Then they sought me of themselves, then I was beginning to become a magician, more and more, but men knew nothing of it.

When I saw the hill spirits again a great dog was running after them, a parti-coloured dog ; it, too, became my helping spirit.

It was only when many people fell sick that I revealed myself as a magician. And I helped many who were ill.

My helping spirits know my thoughts and my will, and they help me when I give commands.

Once I was very ill, and then I lost a great deal of my magic power. My helping spirits began to despise me, they despised me because I fell ill. Now I am again a great magician. Even my wife can hear the spirits when they come to me, and I know when people are going to fall ill, and I know when they can recover.

"Seest thou, Meqo will perhaps die in the autumn, but perhaps I may help her. Meqo will be ill."

"Have you told her husband?"

"No, not yet; but I know it, my helping spirit has said it."

"Canst thou help her?"

"Yes, perhaps; I am a magician, you see, and my helping spirits do my will; but there are many who are far greater magicians than I."

Spirit worship among the Polar Eskimos is a very simplified affair if we compare it with that of the East Greenlanders, or the (now Christianised) West Greenlanders. For one thing, the Polar Eskimos no longer attach much importance to the dazzling juggling and ventriloquial arts which augment to such



OTAQ'S WIFE





a great degree the excitement of an East Greenlandic *séance*, at which you would hear many voices interrupting each other, subterranean choirs, or bellowing monsters.

Moreover, it was a much more arduous probation through which the East Greenlander had to pass before he could "come forward" among his fellows. Amongst other things, he had to allow himself to be swallowed by a monster similar in appearance to a bear, which, only after having chewed him limb for limb, spat him out again. If he could survive such treatment in the presence of an old Angákoq, he was declared a genuine magician; such a one could fly up to heaven or dive down to the bottom of the sea.

The incantations themselves were carried on with far more apparatus, with extinguished lamps, to the accompaniment of the striking of stiff, wind-dried skins, which produced a mystic, thunder-like sound.

I myself met and for a long time lived with one of these East Greenlandic magicians, who declared to me that he had once been "spirit-hardened" by the teeth of a monster.

These East Greenlanders were likewise great extempore poets, and decided all differences by what one might call "skull-songs," during which, to the singing of insulting verses, they struck their opponents as many blows on the head as were required to "heal up the eye-socket," an expression used to imply such a swelling up of the cheeks that the forehead and temples and eyes could not be distinguished.

In comparison with these latter the Polar Eskimo magicians are exceedingly gentle and make but little ado. They themselves say that all the great ones are dead. Once upon a time it was customary among them, too, to fly up to heaven and down to the bottom of the sea in a soul-flight; a magician could take off his own skin and draw it on again, and in the hearing of many people the spirits would assemble, when the lamps were extinguished, just as on the East coast. Now this magic art is dead, together with the old men; the last of them was Sagdloq, who is spoken of in a preceding chapter.

Nevertheless,—even if their incantations are more gentle

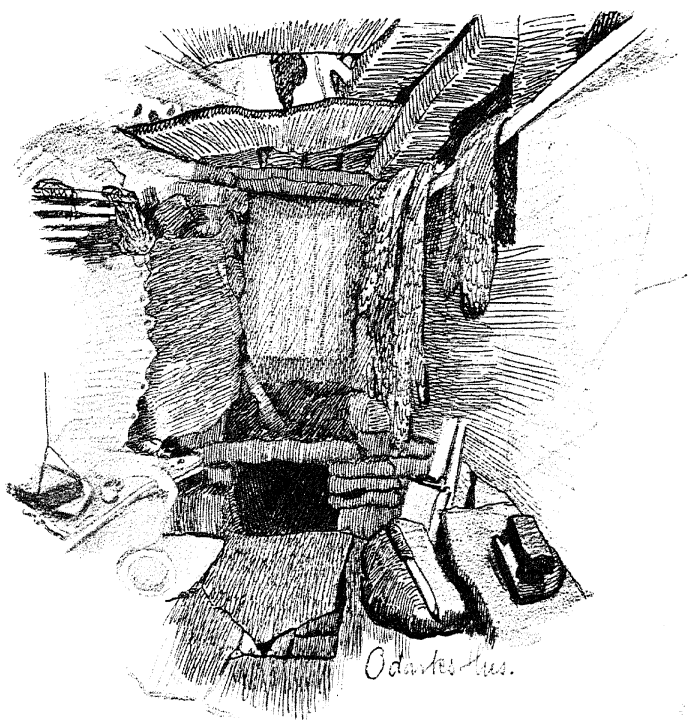
and their art not so developed as in past times,—now, as before, they are the masters of their helping spirits. The incantations take place in the winter in the houses, with lamps turned low, and in the summer in tents, by daylight. The pretext of a conjuration of spirits is either illness, continuous bad weather, or a bad fishing and hunting season.

When an Angákoq becomes “inspired,” he groans, as if he were near fainting, begins to tremble all over from head to foot, and then suddenly springs out on the floor and strikes up the monotonous spirit-song, to a text which he improvises to fit the



special case that he has to treat. He sings the chant loudly and more loudly, and gradually, as the conjuration progresses, he grows more and more unrestrained in his antics and his cries. He sighs and groans, as if invisible powers were pulling at him, and he often makes it appear as if he were being vanquished by a strong power.

But further than this, the auditors see nothing of the spirits. The Angákut themselves declare that they suffer agonies in every limb while the spirits communicate their prophecies to them. And, during the song, which is accompanied by beats on a little round drum, they sometimes work themselves up into a peculiar state of ecstasy, during which, with their closed eyes, long floating hair, and anguished expression, they sometimes produce an overwhelming effect on their auditors.



THE INTERIOR OF OTAQ'S HOUSE, FACING THE ENTRANCE



In the old days, when the Angákut could do everything, as the Eskimos say, one of their favourite duties, when hunting animals grew scarce, was to go down under the sea to Nerrivik ("The Food Dish"), the ruler of the sea-creatures. It is said that she has only one hand, and so she cannot herself plait her hair and arrange it on the top of her head. So the magicians go down to her and help her, and she shows her gratitude by releasing many of the animals to men.

There is a legend

#### OF HOW "THE FOOD DISH" CAME INTO BEING

A petrel once took it into his head to marry a human being. He got himself a smart seal-skin, and, as he had bad eyes, made himself spectacles of walrus tusks. He was of course anxious to look his best. Then he went, in the shape of a man, away to human beings, got a wife and took her home with him.

Then the petrel would catch fish, called them young seals, and bring them to his wife.

One day it happened that his spectacles fell off, and then the wife saw his bad eyes and burst into tears, for she thought him so ugly.

But the husband began to laugh: "Oh! did you see my eyes, yah—hah—hah—hah!" and then he put on his spectacles again.

But the brothers, who missed their sister, came one day to see her. And as her husband was out hunting, they took her home with them when they went back.

The petrel was in despair when he came home, and, as he suspected that his wife had been abducted, he started after the fugitives. He flapped his wings with great force, and the beating of his wings raised a mighty storm; for you see he was a great magician.

When the storm broke out, the umiaq<sup>1</sup> began to ship water, and the wind increased in force as he redoubled the vigour of his flapping.

<sup>1</sup> A boat rowed by women.

The waves rose white with foam, and the umiaq was in danger of capsizing, so when they perceived in the boat that it was the woman who was the cause of the storm, they took her and threw her out into the sea. She tried to cling to the edge of the boat, but her grandfather jumped up and cut her hand off.

So she was drowned; but at the bottom of the sea she became "Nerrivik," that is, "The Food Dish," the ruler over all sea-creatures. When men can catch no seals, the magicians go down to Nerrivik. As she has lost her one hand, she cannot arrange her hair herself; they do it for her, and in her gratitude she lets some of the seals and other animals free, for men to catch.

This is the story of the Queen of the Sea, and they call her "The Food Dish," because she sends food to men.

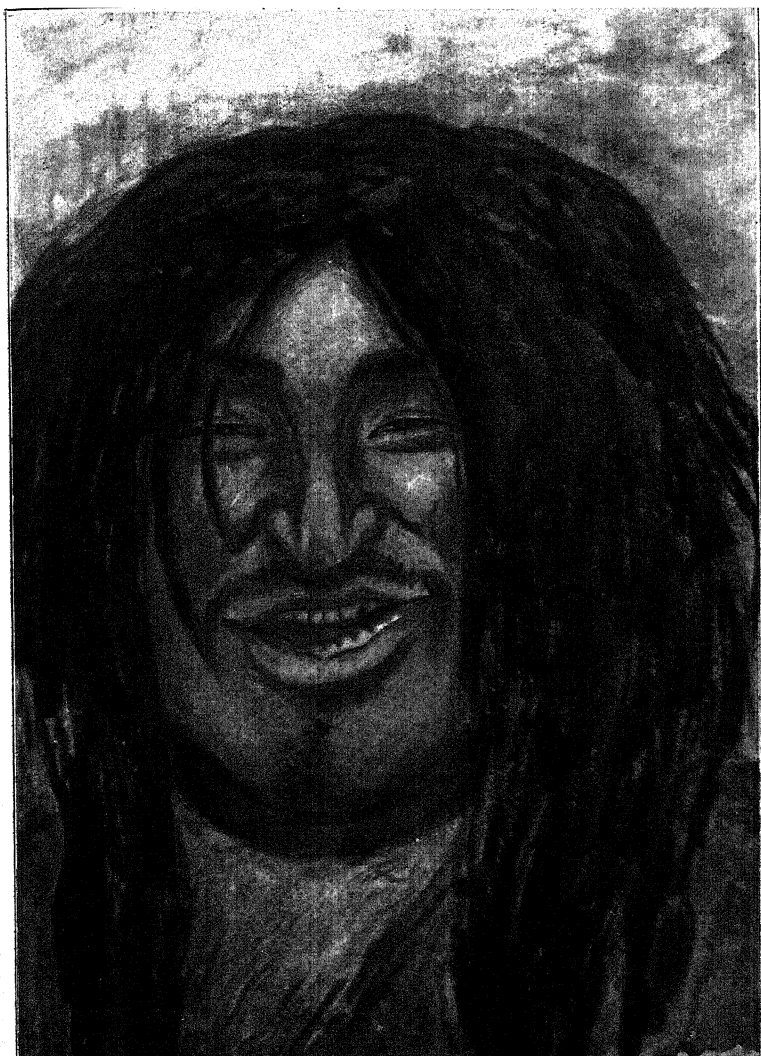
*Told by AISIVAK (of Agpat).*

As a rule the assistance of the magicians is invoked by their fellows when something is the matter; and then, if they are not related to the person in question, they are paid for their incantations; after an incantation, a magician must not use a knife for a few days.

But it will also happen that magicians, inspired by their helping spirits, call up their fellow-villagers, *nalúngisagalit-dlarângamik*, that is to say, "when there is something that they know." While under the influence of an inspiration of this kind, they can hear people talking in villages several miles away.

If the helping spirit has communicated to them the name of a person who is threatened with illness or other danger, they never, during a public incantation, mention the actual name; they content themselves with allusions that can put their hearers on the right track; and when the latter guess the name of the person implied, the magician breaks out into moans, shouting—

"Yes, it is he. You spoke the name. Oh! I could not help it—I had to say what I knew!"







Between the auditors and the magician there is always active co-operation, inasmuch as the latter's words are perpetually repeated by one of the oldest in the assembly, who incessantly shouts encouragement to the "inspired" one to hold out and give full information. The advice that is given consists always of certain things that the one threatened must not do, rules of conduct that coincide with the various ones before mentioned; or also, a dietary may be prescribed, such, for instance, as that the person must not eat he-walrus and only certain portions of the she-walrus; that all his food must be boiled, and so on. Angákut likewise insist very particularly on each person having his or her own clothing, and never borrowing that of others. Once, for instance, I heard Alattaq the magician complaining very much because the brothers Majaq and Erè were in the habit of borrowing each other's boots. In the same way they insist upon each person having his or her own drinking-vessel; young people, especially, must not drink from the cups of old people; the reverse is not so strictly observed. If a young person has not his own drinking-vessel, he must either pour the water down his throat through his hand, or he must make himself a tube from a large-sized bone, which he holds to his mouth, while he pours into it from the water vessel.

Sometimes a very eager Angákoq will adduce the most extraordinary causes for an illness. Once, I remember, Piuaitsoq's little child fell ill, and Alattaq was summoned to hold an incantation, to which the whole village was invited. He called upon his spirits and conjured them until far into the night, and discovered that the reason of the child's illness was that once, for fun, the little one's fox-skin breeches had been put on a puppy!

There is a special spirit language which is made use of during an incantation. Angákut must not mention people, implements of the chase, or the larger animals, by their usual designations. Here I will mention the principal special words employed.

Person: *tau* (shadow); the usual word, *inuk*. Children:

*niviarsiarqat*, otherwise *perâpaluit*. Babies : *quajâtsiat*, otherwise *nâlungiarssuit*. Head : *kangeq*, otherwise *niagoq*; has a headache, *kangerdlugpoq*. Lungs : *anerneqarfît* (that with which one draws breath), otherwise *puak*.

Dog : *pungo*, otherwise *qingmeq*. Puppy : *punguatsiaq*, otherwise *qingmerârssuk*. Sledge : *sisorant* (that with which you slide forward), otherwise *qamutit*.

Kayak : *putsarigssat* (floaters : that with which one keeps afloat), otherwise *qajaq*. Seal : *qajuaq*, otherwise *puisse*. Walrus : *sitdlâlik*, otherwise *auveg*. Bearded seal : *magdlak* (the violent), otherwise *uksuk*. White whales or narwhals : *agdlagagssat*, otherwise *qilalwkat*. Bears : *ajagpagtoq*, otherwise *nanog*. Reindeer : *kumarugssat* (louse, that is to say, of the earth), otherwise *tugto*. Fox : *pisugkaitsiaq* (the wanderer), otherwise *teriangniaq*.

Seal-skin thong : *ninguaq* (the strong), otherwise *agdlunâq*. The tusks of a walrus or narwhal : *nutsat*, otherwise *tûgâq*. The earth : *nunarâq*, otherwise *nuna*. The world or the air : *silarâq*, otherwise *silâ*. Snow : *anêjôq*, otherwise *aput*. Ice : *ulugssag* (that which can be packed), otherwise *siko*. Wind : *suwdluaq* (that which makes a draught), otherwise *anore*. Stone : *mangerit* (the hard one), otherwise *ujarak*. The sea : *aqitsog* (the soft one), otherwise *imaq*. Birds : *qangatsautit* (flyers), otherwise *tingmissat*.

House : *nuvdlîk*, otherwise *igdllo*. Larder : *ilissivik* (the place where one puts something), otherwise *serdluaq*. Food : *aipatit*, otherwise *nerissagssat*. Clothes : *ânorssat*, otherwise *ânorât*. Tent : *napagag* (that erected), otherwise *tupeq*.

A magician does not always require spirit songs and vehement conjurations in order to call up spirits ; in a less serious case he may content himself with placing a person on his back on the sleeping-place, binding a seal-leather thong round his head, and pulling it up and down, saying : “*qilâka nauk?*—where are my spirits?” When the tightly bound head is so heavy that the magician cannot raise it from the pallet, he says : “*tâssa qilavagit!*—it is my helping spirit!” and the latter is on the spot and inspires him with what he



A POLAR HARE



is to say; meanwhile the medium lies still with closed eyes. This mode of conjuration is called *qilaneq*. It is sometimes enough merely to sit down on the ground, bind a thong round one leg, and pull it up and down with the same cries as above; when the leg grows so heavy that it cannot be lifted, the spirit is present. This was how the female magician, Nivigkana, conjured for one of my dogs that had fallen ill. She placed herself in a trance, during which she saw a spirit pulling at my dog; it had stolen the soul from it, and that was why the dog was ill; but Nivigkana said she had demanded it back, and the dog would recover. It did recover, and Nivigkana's fame spread through the village.

Both men and women can become Angákut, but women are rarely dangerous as such; they have not the courage to do evil, say the Eskimos. An Angákoq who can call down misfortune on his fellows is called an *ilisítsoq*; without showing himself to his victim, he can kill him with a "*tupilak*," an animal made by the magician himself, as a rule a seal, which appears to the man against whom he bears a grudge. The *tupilak* can either capsize the man's kayak without allowing itself to be taken, or it can let itself be harpooned and killed. The man who kills a seal of this sort loses all strength out of his body and becomes a cripple.

As previously mentioned, Tâterâq had caught a *tupilak*; one autumn day, as they were making their way home from the chase, towing a walrus, a seal came to the surface just in front of the kayaks. Tâterâq was at once beside himself with hunting ardour, and shouted and comported himself generally like a madman. He rowed forward and harpooned the animal, and it was only after he had killed it that he grew calm again.

When they got home and cut it up, they discovered that the animal had been made by an Angákoq. The chest was like a human being's, and the rest of the bones had been taken from different animals.

A short time afterwards Tâterâq fell ill, and gradually his body died. He, who used to be one of the best seal-

catchers, has now lain for several years paralysed and helpless on a sledge among the houses.

It was thought that it was old Qilerneq who had made this tupilak. He would have put the bones of various animals together, covered them with turf and clots of blood, and conjured the object into life by a special magic song.

Magicians are sometimes soul-stealers; the people affected then fall ill and die. Some little time before our arrival at Cape York a man named Kajorapaluk had been murdered "because he stole souls."

This is an account in brief of the magician system among



the Polar Eskimos. The great majority of course believe blindly in the magician's capacity to make use of supernatural forces, and the few sceptics who, in an ordinary way, represent a certain opposition, are equally keen adherents of the mysteries at crucial moments.

The magicians themselves are undoubtedly self-deceived in the conduct of their incantations; I do not believe that they consciously lie. Otherwise, why should they, when they themselves fall ill, seek the help of the spirits?

But their magic arts are degenerating and growing more and more simplified. The Polar Eskimos are well-to-do folk; there are animals enough in the sea and meat in abundance; they are strong, healthy, energetic people, possessing a suffi-

ciency of the necessities of life as demanded by an existence which is, according to their ideas, free from care. This state of things is doubtless the reason why the Angákoq system is not so highly developed there as, for instance, it has been on the East coast, where the struggle for existence seems to be much more severe, and where the failure of the fishery, and as a consequence famine, have been more frequent.

The Polar Eskimos do not require to make constant appeals to the supernatural powers, and that is why their magicians have gradually forgotten the magic arts of their fathers.





## PART III

### FABLES AND LEGENDS

*Men used to have stronger vital sap than now ; that was  
in the days when all countries were inhabited.*

*Then things were done that we do not understand now,  
and the eye saw things which are hidden from us.*

*But the tongue has carried down the experiences of the  
old men to us, whose vital sap is more diluted.*

MAJAO.

[These fables and legends were written down during the Polar Night. They are told in the houses at this Season, when the Eskimos, after great banquets of raw, frozen meat late in the evening, are digesting their food and are heavy and tired. Then it is the task of the story-teller to talk his hearers to sleep. The best story-tellers boast of never having told any story to the end.

The legends are known to all; it is the grandmother's business to teach them to her grandchildren.

This is the first time that the legends of the Polar Eskimos have been put on record, and my principle, during my task, has been never to repeat any story until I myself had learnt it and told it. In this way I made the whole manner of the story-telling my own, and I have endeavoured, as far as possible, to give literal translations.—K. R.]



## ANIMAL FABLES

### THE RACE OF THE WORM AND THE LOUSE TO MAN

It is said that our fathers had no lice,—lucky people. But once it happened that a man lay down to sleep on the ground, and the worm and the louse saw him.

The worm, which flattered itself it was quick on its legs, said to the louse: "Look! a man! Shall we see which of us can reach him first?" They started off at a run as quickly as they could, but the worm fell down, and the louse arrived first.

"Man does not taste at all nice; the earth is the only food," called out the worm, as it fell down. "I prefer to be the earth's louse."

But the louse merely made haste on to the man and found in him both food and home.

And since then men have had lice.

*Told by ARNALUK (an old woman of about sixty).*

### LICE

Our forefathers had forbidden women who had just given birth to children to mention lice by name, or to complain when they caused irritation. Once upon a time there was a woman who had just become a mother, and who was horribly tormented by lice on her shoulder.

"It is strange," said she, "that such tiny, toothless animals can bite so hard!" but, as she stole a glance towards her shoulder, she saw a frightful mouth with great teeth.

See, it was the louse who, angry at what she had said, had assumed the shape of a monster.

The woman was so frightened that she died.

Since this occurrence women in childbirth have been forbidden to mention lice by name.

This happened in the days of our forefathers,—in the days when a thoughtless tongue could fashion monsters which brought about great misfortunes.

Generally, the louse is afraid of human beings; this is proved by the following legend.

Two lice were once talking together.

“Give me my mittens; they are hanging on the post,” said the husband.

They lived in a reindeer skin, and it was the hairs that the husband called posts.

“Oh no; stay at home with me,” said the wife; “the people will kill you.”

“Do not be uneasy,” replied the husband; “I must have something to eat, you know. The only thing I am afraid of is that two icebergs may fall down on me and crush me; in that case I shall never come back. But that does not often happen.”

The louse called a man’s nails icebergs.

“If I am only eaten,” he went on, “I shall come back again, and so you need not be afraid for me; I shall only be scalded a little red by passing through the man’s stomach.”

So the wife was satisfied, and gave him his mittens.

“Oh! I shall find myself a delicate armhole!” said the louse, and vanished.

He was a very long time away, and when he came home again he was red all over.

This is what happened to Avuvang when, in the course of his soul migrations, he became a louse. From him we know the lives of all the animals.

*Told by OSARQAQ (young man of about twenty-five).*

## THE RAVEN WHO WAS ANXIOUS TO BE MARRIED

A little sparrow was grieving for her husband, who had not returned. She was fond of him, because he used to catch worms for her.

As she sat weeping, a raven came up to her and asked—

“What are you crying for?”

“I am crying for my husband, who has not returned. I was fond of him, because he caught worms for me,” said the sparrow.

“Weeping is not seemly for those who can hop about on the top of the blades of grass. Marry me—me, with my lovely high forehead, broad temples, long beard, and large beak. You shall sleep under my wings, and dainty dung shall be your food.”

“I will not marry you, just because you have a high forehead, broad temples, long beard, and large beak—and because you offer me dung for food.”

So the raven went his way, and went to make love to the wild geese. And he was so sick with love that he could not sleep. The wild geese were just about to fly away when he reached them.

“As a silly sparrow has rejected me, I should like to marry you,” said the raven to two geese.

“You arrive just as we are about to fly away,” said the geese.

“I will come with you,” said the raven.

“But see, that is impossible for any one who cannot rest on the sea. There are no icebergs that way.”

“Never mind! I will sail through the air.”

And so he took the two geese as his wives.

Then the wild geese set off, and the raven with them; but it was not long before he began to drop behind, he was so tired and drowsy. “Something—to rest upon! Place yourselves side by side!” he cried. And his two wives placed themselves side by side on the water, while their comrades went on.

The raven settled himself upon their backs and fell asleep. But when his wives saw the other wild geese getting farther and farther away, they shook the raven off into the sea and flew on.

“Something to rest upon!” shrieked the raven, as it fell

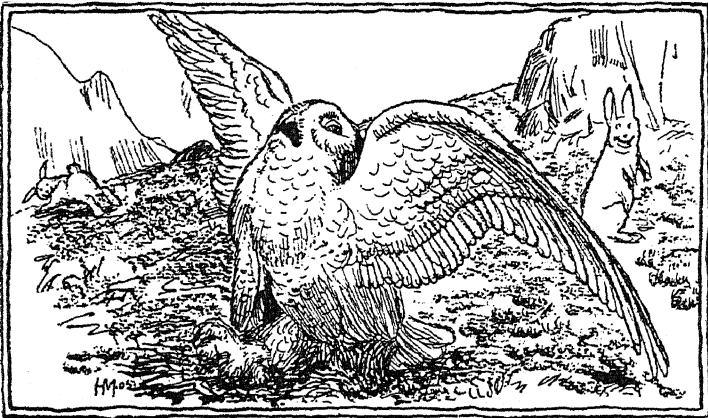
with a great splash into the water. At last it sank to the bottom and was drowned.

Afterwards it broke up into small pieces, and its soul became little "sea ravens" (black pteropods).

*Told by AISIVAK (an old woman of about sixty).*

### THE OWL WHO WAS TOO GREEDY

A man out walking came to a cave in which the owl, the raven, the gull, the hawk, and the arctic skua (dunghunter) lived together in human shape.



All were anxious to play host to the man, so went out hunting.

The raven came back with human dung, and on its arrival said to one of its children—

"Thou with the broad shoulders, fetch the piece of whale-skin without blubber from outside: the man must eat."

But the man would not eat it—only the raven and the gull ate; even the other inhabitants of the cave refused it.

Then the gull went out and came back with Polar cod, which were as delicate as icicles. The man ate of them and thought them good.

Then the hawk went out, and caught eider-ducks and Little Auks.

The man ate them too, gladly.

The arctic skua, who had no meat, began to vomit ; but the man despised that.

Then at last the owl spoke—

“ Now let me see if I can provide something for our guest,” and he flew off.

On a plain he saw two hares and started to pursue them ; but as he greedily wanted to catch them both, and the hares suddenly ran off in different directions, the owl, trying to go both ways at once, was torn in two, and died. So he was never able to get food for the man.

*Told by ARNALUK.*

### THE MAN WHO TOOK A WIFE FROM AMONG THE WILD GEESE

A man once saw a huge flock of wild geese in the middle of a large lake. They had thrown off their feather coats and turned into men and women, and they were bathing and playing about in the water.

He was seized with a desire to take two of them for wives, so hid their coats ; but as he sprang forward and caught them, one of them wept so bitterly that he gave her her coat back. The other he brought home with him to his grandmother and made his wife.

She soon gave him twins, both boys.

But the wild goose grew homesick for her comrades and began to collect bird's feathers and wings. She soon had enough.

And one day, when her husband was out seal-catching, she made herself a coat of feathers and flew away with her children.

When the husband came home, he set off at once to seek them, and started at a run along the land.

On the way he met with two earth spirits, who were tearing each other's hair. They placed themselves in his way, but he



flew over them by magic, for he was a great magician. Next he met with two hillock spirits that were trampling upon one another. They too blocked his way, but he flew over them by magic.

Then he came to a pot that had seal's flesh boiling in it, and it was talking to itself—"A man po-po-po."

It wanted to entice him to eat, but he flew over it by magic again, then came to a flock of hairless puppy dogs, that also wished to prevent him passing.

They were the earth's dogs, hairless, like worms. He passed them by, and went on to Kajungajorssuaq, a man who was horribly deformed behind.

The magician, who knew his thoughts, and knew that he was ashamed of his appearance, approached him from the front.

"How did you come?" asked the man.

"I came this way," replied the man.

"Good; if you had come up from behind me, I would have killed you. You shall go on to the people that you are seeking; I can hear them from here." And he showed him the way.

The magician shut his eyes and leaped down on an ice-floe, and in this way approached those he was seeking.

And as he went towards them his children saw him.

"Father has come," they called out.

"I will see him; bring him in," said the wife.

And he went in.

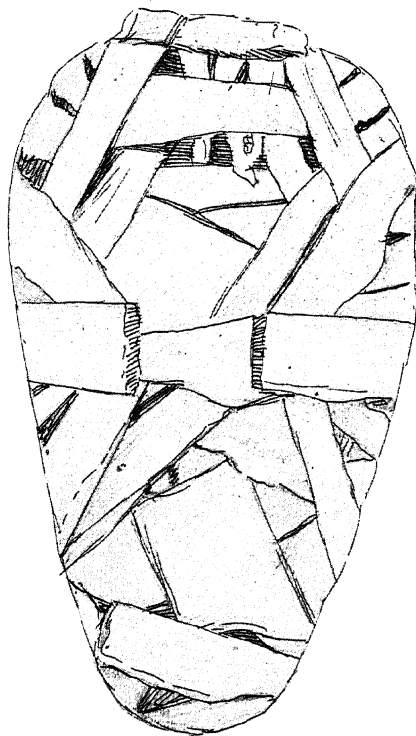
She, in the meantime, had taken another husband, an old fellow, who at once took flight.

"Let me get out; I am losing my paunch, qoa-r-r-rit!" he cried, and rushed out through the passage. He was an old long-tailed duck.

The man and wife then lived together again, but as the wife did not care for her husband, she pretended one day to die.

The husband buried her, but as soon as he had gone away from her she broke out of the cairn.

"I saw Mother over there," the children began to cry out.



ARRANGEMENT OF THE STONES IN A TYPICAL  
ESKIMO ROOF, SEEN FROM BELOW



"Oh! then let us look at her," replied the man, and looked out of the window. "Who are you?" he asked.

"I am Qitdluk," lied she.

So then he harpooned his wife in his anger.

When the murder became known, her compatriots changed into wild geese and flew away.

But the man, who thought that they would come back again to take their revenge, went again to Kajungajorssuaq; and he gave him a long, heavy whip-lash.

And then one day they came into sight, the avengers, and drew near like a great cloud; but he lashed at their plumage and killed them.

Only a few escaped. But they came again—a larger flock of them—and again he thrashed them to death, this time all of them.

After that the man lived for a long time on all the fat wild geese.

Yes, that is the end of this story.

*Told by TATERAQ (middle-aged man).*

### THE MAN WHO TOOK A FOX TO WIFE

There was once upon a time a man who thought he would like to take a wife who was not like everybody else's wife, and so he caught a little fox and took her with him to his tent.

One day he had been out seal-catching, and came home and surprised his little wife, who had changed into a woman. She had a lovely big knot of hair on her head: that was her tail. And she had taken off her shaggy skin. And when he saw her like that he thought her very beautiful.

Then she began to wish to see other people; and so they went away and settled down elsewhere.

There was one of the men there who had taken a little hare to wife. The two men thought they would like to exchange wives, and they did so.

But the man who had borrowed the little fox-wife despised

her when he had lain down beside her. She smelt so strongly of fox, and it was not pleasant.

And when the fox saw it, she was angry, because she was so anxious to please men ; and she put out the lamp with her tail, sprang out of the house, and fled far away into the hills.

Up there she found a worm, and stayed with him.

But her husband, who was fond of her, went after her, and found her at last with the worm, who had clothed himself in human shape.

But it so happened that he was the man's mortal enemy of yore ; for it appeared that once, a long, long time before, he had burnt a worm, and that worm's soul was the very one that had changed itself into a man. The man could see, too, that its face was all burnt.

The worm then challenged the man, and suggested that they should pull each other's arms, and so they wrestled, but the man found the worm very easy to vanquish, and then he went out and would not have anything more to do with his wife, and he started off on his travels and came to the strand-dwellers. They had houses on the beach by the sea-shore, just at the turning of the tide.

Their houses were quite small, and they themselves were dwarfs, who called eider-ducks walruses, but otherwise they looked just like men. They were quite harmless.

We never see those sort of people now, but our forefathers told us of them ; they knew them.

And when the man saw their houses, which had roofs of stone, he went in to them, but he had to make himself quite small ; he was a very great magician, you know.

And as soon as he entered they brought out meat, a whole shoulder of a large walrus. In reality, it was only the wing of an eider-duck. And they began to eat greedily of it, but did not eat it all.

After he had stayed for a time with these people, he went back to his own house, and I have nothing more to tell about him.

*Told by ARNAJAQ (young woman).*

## HOW THE NARWHAL CAME

Once upon a time there was a man who could not see, and when his fellow-villagers went out seal-catching, they left him with his mother and his little sister.

One day as the blind man lay asleep the mother woke him.

"A bear, a bear in the window!" she said, and he strained his bow, and she guided his hand.

"That sounded as if the bear had been hit!" he said, as the arrow fell.

"Oh no! you hit the window-sill."

She wanted to eat the bear all herself—she gave her son only shell-fish.

But the little sister let lumps of meat drop down under her fur-collar and gave them to her brother.

One day in the middle of summer the blind man said to his sister—

"Lead me up to a lake."

And she guided him up to a lake.

As he stood there by the lake, a loon came and began to speak.

"Take hold of me round my neck, I will carry you!" it said. And then it dived down into the sea with him. The blind man came near losing his breath. Then it came up to the surface of the lake for a little, and then went down again and then up, and then down again.

The blind man gasped for breath.

"Do you see land?" asked the loon.

"I see!" shouted the man, but the loon dived again, and then again.

"Do you see now?"

"I see wide countries!"

And then the man had his sight again and went home.

"A bear-skin spread out!" exclaimed the man, when he arrived home.

"One that has been left by Persoqaq," lied his mother.

"Look, look, white whales in sight!" said the man.

"Harpoon them! harpoon them! and bind me fast to the line!" said the mother eagerly. And so he used her to fasten the line to.

"Choose the little one, I can manage that," called out the mother, and so he threw the harpoon at a little white whale, which they caught.

The next day he determined to put an end to his mother's life, to avenge himself, and he harpooned a large white whale, which dragged the mother into the sea after it.

"My curved knife, my curved knife!" cried the mother, as she was about to disappear in the waves. She wanted to cut the line.

But she did not come back, and was changed into a narwhal, for she plaited her hair into tusks, and from her the narwhals are descended. Before her, there were only white whales.

The man grieved that he had killed his mother and went away with his sister.

On their travels they came to people with long claws. These people had no knives, but used their claws to flay and cut up animals.

"Let them come in," said the oldest of them.

And when the two had gone in, they tore the sister to pieces and ate her.

"Why are you eating her?" cried out the brother, in anger, and killed them with a walrus tusk. Then he collected his sister's bones, put them in a bag and carried them away.

He was a great magician, and as he carried his sister thus on his back, she began gradually to come to life again, and at last she began to talk—

"Brother, let me become well." Then she began to grow heavy to carry.

"Brother, I will walk myself." And she walked.

Then they came to people again, people without any rumps to their backs, only to their hands. Among them the brother took a wife and the sister a husband.

The brother and sister settled down among these people for good, and had children, and grew old.

*Told by ARNALUK.*



KALE'S GRAVE





## THE ICE-MAN

Once upon a time a fissure occurred in an ice-hill ; the ice snapped like a pistol-shot, and the noise of it as it broke, received life and became a man ; his name was Nuté, that is, fissure. His face was full of cracks, and so he was ashamed to meet people.

He always lived in the dark and never took off his mittens.

One day he paid a visit to a woman and her daughter, and made the daughter his wife.

He was a very clever seal-hunter.

But one day his mother-in-law began to tease him with lies.

"My mittens! I am not a man, and I will not live like a man ; let me go back to the dark again," said Nuté, and went back to his glacier.

"Ah! I thought that you were outside, ka-ka-ka-ka," screamed the mother-in-law, and became a fox.

"Whatever is happening to mother!" said the girl.

But the fox sprang up amongst the rocks.

The daughter soon became a mother, and her child was a boy. When he reached manhood, he became a mighty hunter.

Here ends this story.

*Told by ITERFILUK (middle-aged woman).*

## THE CATERPILLAR

A woman adopted a caterpillar, and nursed it. In this way she made it grow. At last it grew very big, and she was obliged to fasten it to the sleeping-place, for it wanted to go out.

It was quite covered with hair, the caterpillar, and frightful to look upon.

But one day when it heard some children crying, it broke its fastenings, chased them, and ate a little child.

The people in the village were horrified at its having eaten the little child, but the woman would not kill it, because it was her baby.

At last the men lay in wait outside the entrance passage, and made children scream. The caterpillar came tearing out, and then they killed it. They had grown afraid of it, after it had eaten a little child.

*Told by TATERAQ.*

### THE WOMAN WHO NURSED A WORM

A woman who had no children took a worm from a hillock and nursed it.

She made a little fur-coat for it of warm fur, and the worm grew big. At last it was as big as an arm, and she used to keep it in the sleeves of her fur-coat.

The worm grew bigger and bigger, but the woman grew thinner and thinner. At last her mother grew afraid, and one day, while her daughter was out, she took the worm and struck it against the floor.

“Ih-i-i-ih!” said the worm, and burst, with a loud report.

The blood streamed out and the dogs came and licked it up.

But when the woman came home and did not find her child, she burst into tears.

*Told by TATERAQ.*

## THE SUN, THE MOON, AND THE STARS

THE Sun and the Moon were brother and sister. Once in the winter, during the long night, people began to play in the houses, with the lamps out. Then one by one the men took outside the women they had been with, and lighted torches to see who they were. . . . Then when the Moon led out his, he saw by the light of the torch that it was the Sun, his sister.

The Sun was ashamed at having lain with her brother, tore off her breasts, and threw them down in front of him.

"I am according to your taste,—here! taste this too."

Then she ran away, and her brother started after her; both of them held their torches in their hands.

All at once they began to rise up into the air, but the Moon fell, and his torch went out, so that it only glowed. Thus they got up to the sky. The Sun, who kept her torch burning, is brilliantly light and hot, but the Moon, whose torch is merely glowing, is light only without giving warmth. Now they have their house in heaven, divided into two rooms.

In the height of summer the Sun never goes into her house; she is out day and night, and the earth is delightful then, when the snow melts and the flowers grow. During that time the Moon never goes out of his house.

But in the winter, when the Sun no longer leaves her house at all, the long Dark comes, and then it is uncomfortable for men. The cold Moon has to give light by himself, but as he also has to help people in other ways, he disappears sometimes. You see, he has to fetch animals for men to catch. That is why we say, at the new Moon: "Thank you! you have brought animals for us."

During the long Dark, people do not go out fishing ; they only pay visits to one another and sing drum-songs. Only when a bear ventures near the houses, or hides himself in a hollow in a glacier, do they light big torches and hunt it.

When the constellation of the Great Bear is seen at dawn men are filled with great delight ; for then it will not be long till the light comes again.

And when at last the Sun comes men call out : " Joy ! joy ! the great Warmer has come ; soon we shall be able to seek the sunny side ! " And then comes the time when people build sheltering walls of snow and gather round a man's meat at great banquets.

*Told by MAISANGUAG (a man of about thirty).*

### THE INHABITANTS OF THE MOON

There was once upon a time a woman who ran away to the hills ; she could not walk, but had to crawl, for her husband had stabbed the soles of her feet with his knife.

On her way she saw a sledge going along through the air. This was the Great Man in the Moon.

" Ho ! Great Man in the Moon," she called to him, and he came to her. When he had come near to her, he wished to have her for his wife.

On his sledge he had many seal-skins ; he began to take them off, so that she could sit down on the bottom one.

" Shut your eyes ! " he said to her, and then they drove up through the air.

" When you come into my house you must not on any account look in the direction of the Sun ; nor must you smile, for then the Stealer of Entrails would cut the intestines out of your body," the man explained to her.

It is said that just by the side of the Moon there lives a man who steals the intestines out of people. He is the cousin of the Moon. He visits the Moon and dances drum-dances with him. During his singing and dancing, he tries to make people laugh, and if he can make them even smile, he rips up their bodies and



CHRISTMAS EVE IN A SNOW HUT



takes the intestines out; for that purpose he always carries about with him a wooden tray. His face tempts strongly to laughter, for he has large projecting eyes and nostrils turned upwards, and he twists his body about in the dance, in time with the beats of the drum.

Yes, and so the Man in the Moon arrived at his house.

"Now take care, whatever you do, not to look at the Sun," he said again; "for if you rouse her curiosity she might burn you."

Then they went into the house. The woman stole just a little tiny glance at the Sun, and her fur-coat was burnt at once.

On the sleeping-place at the side, she found a number of people who had had their intestines cut out.

Before, the Moon had used a seal-bone for a wife, but now that he had a real woman, he despised it and threw it into the back part of the house.

"Hum!" it said, offended, as it fell.

"When you are about to be a mother you can go home," said he to his new wife.

At last the day arrived that the intestine-stealer came to pay his visit and began to dance his drum-dance. His wife stood in the window and watched.

"She was just going to smile then," she called out; but it was not true, and at last the intestine-stealer had to go, angry, without having got what he wanted.

One day the woman looked down on the earth from her sleeping-place, and she caught sight of her two little children walking hand in hand; and she grew homesick. At last, when she was about to be a mother, the Moon man took her home.

Then, after he had left her, he always sent her food, for he dropped bears, foxes, and hares down on the earth.

But one day an old woman surprised him, and then he was ashamed, and after that he never brought food again.

It was through the narratives of this woman that human beings learnt about the inhabitants of the Moon.

*Told by ARNALUK.*



## THE GREAT BEAR

A woman who had had a miscarriage had run away from her family. As she ran, she came to a house. In the passage lay the skins of bears. She went in.

The inhabitants turned out to be bears in human shape.

But she stayed with them. One big bear caught seals for them. He pulled on his skin, went out, and remained away some time, but always brought something home. One day the woman who had run away took a fancy to see her relations and wanted to go home, and then the bear spoke to her.

"Do not talk about us when you get back to men," he said to her. He was afraid that his two young ones might be killed by men.

So the woman went home, and a great desire to tell came over her; and one day, as she sat caressing her husband, she whispered in his ear—

"I have seen bears!"

Many sledges drove out, and when the bear saw them coming towards his house he had great compassion on his young ones and bit them to death. He did not wish them to fall into the power of men.

Then he rushed out to look for the woman who had deceived him, broke into the house where she was, and bit her to death. When he came out again the dogs closed up in a circle round him and rushed upon him. The bear defended himself, and suddenly they all became luminous and rose up into the sky as stars. And those are what they call *Qilugtússat*; they who are like a flock of barking dogs after a bear.

Since then men have been cautious about bears, for they hear what men say.

*Told by AISIVAK.*

## VENUS

There was once an old man who stood out on the ice and waited for seals to come to the breathing-holes to breathe. But close to him, on the shore, a large troop of children





were playing in a cleft of the fjeld; and time after time they frightened the seals away from him, just as he was about to harpoon them.

At last the old man became furious with them for disturbing his seal-catching and shouted—

“Close, cleft, over those who frighten my catch away!”

And immediately the cleft closed in over the playing children. One of them, who was carrying a little child, got the tail of her fur-coat cut to bits.

Then they all began to scream inside the cleft of the rock, because they could not get out. And no one could take food to them down there, but they poured a little water down to them through a tiny opening in the fissure. And they licked it up from the side of the rock.

At last they all died of hunger.

The rock which is spoken of in this story is near Igdluluarssuit, up towards Neqe.

People then attacked the old man who had made the rock close over the children by his magic. He started off at a run and the others ran after him.

All at once he became luminous and shot up to the sky, and now he sits up there as a great star. We see it in the west when the light begins to return after the long Dark; but very low down—it never comes up very high. We call it Nálagssartog: he who stands and listens. Perhaps because the old man stood out on the ice and listened for the seals to come up to breathe.

*Told by MAISANGUAQ.*

# QUEER STORIES AND TRAVELLING ADVENTURES

## THE GIANT

THERE was once a giant; he was so big that he called the Polar bear a fox.

One day he saw five kayaks and thought he would like to use the men as amulets; and so he scooped them up in his hand, brought them home to his house, and put them on a shelf under the lamp.



Then the giant ate Polar bear and whale-beef and fell asleep.

He was so big that his lice were foxes.

And when a few foxes had slipped in and begun to bite his head, he muttered—

“Don’t drip the lamp-black over me!”

He thought that it was the men, pouring lamp-black down. They positively shook with fear.

Then they tried to get 'down, lowering themselves by seal-skin thongs.

And then all at once the giant began to talk in his sleep.

"Tread on the lamp-stone!" he muttered. The men shuddered.

At last they reached the floor, and ran towards the door; but the threshold was so high that they very nearly failed to get over it.

At last they were free, and ran down to their kayaks and escaped.

When the giant awoke and discovered that the men had escaped, he cried, annoyed with himself—

"Oh, why did I not tear the eyes out of their heads!"

*Told by ANARFWIK (middle-aged woman).*

### THE WOMAN WITH THE IRON TAIL

There was once upon a time a woman with an iron tail, and she was a cannibal as well. . . . When she had any one visiting her, as soon as the guest was asleep, she would leap up and drop on the sleeper, who would be pierced by her tail.

Once a man came to her house and lay down to sleep. When she thought that he was asleep, she began jumping up, and when she was just above him, let herself drop. But the man, who was not asleep at all, sprang to one side, and so she fell with the end of her tail against a stone and broke it.

The man fled, and jumped into his kayak. She after him. When she reached him, she cried—

"Ah! I wish I could drive my hunting knife into the man down there!"

And, as she called out, the man in the kayak nearly cap-sized, for her words had power.

"I wish I could send my harpoon right through her up there," the man called back. And such power had the man's words that the old hag fell backwards on her tail.

Then the man went his way and the woman murdered no more people after that, for her iron tail was broken.

*Told by AISIVAK.*

### THE GIRL WHO WAS TURNED TO STONE

It is said that Qautipaluk had a daughter who was young and beautiful.

And then it is said, too, of an old man who lived somewhere else, that he had a son.

Now the old man wanted to sail by umiak over to Qautipaluk to fetch his daughter for his own son.

They sailed away, and arrived. They landed, but without going up, the old man called out—

“Qautipaluk, some one has come to fetch your daughter!”

“Some one thinks that you smell of dirt!” replied Qautipaluk.

“Very well!” said the old man, “push off again and let her up there turn to stone.”

And Qautipaluk’s daughter immediately began to turn to stone.

The man in the boat was old, and his tongue therefore was sharp.

“Oh,” cried Qautipaluk, when she began to turn to stone, “take her, take her, do!”

But the man only turned his back and sailed away.

*Told by TATERAQ.*

### THE WOMAN WHO MADE CLOTHES OF RAVEN’S FEATHERS

Once a man was killed in a village; and when the people shortly afterwards went away on a hunting expedition, they left behind them the wife of the murdered man, and a bitch; both were about to be mothers, and they had nothing to eat.

The woman soon gave birth to a son, and immediately after it was born she went out to get food for herself and the child.



A REMARKABLY INTELLIGENT ESKIMO WOMAN,  
WIFE OF ASAYUK





She found out how to catch ravens in snares. In this way she caught many ravens and made coats for herself and the boy of the skins. The wings she left on.

Then, when the bitch had littered, she worked magic over both her son and the puppies, so that they were grown up in the course of a year. Then they set out travelling, and soon came among people.

"Some one would beg clothes for her son," said she to the strangers.

"Let children go naked," they replied.

"Then some one would ask for a wife for her son," she went on.

"Children don't take wives," replied the strangers.

"Then you might as well shoot us," said the boy to the many people. So they got out their bows and arrows and began to shoot at the mother and son.

Then the mother placed herself in front and began to work the thong of the bag on her back in which she had carried her son when he was a baby, and all the arrows swerved aside, without hitting. But the woman's son seized the bow and shot all the many people, and then they went further to new countries and new people.

This story I heard from people who came to us from the other side of the Great Sea.

*Told by ARNALUK.*

## THE WOMAN WHO WOULD NOT TAKE A HUSBAND

Isigkârssuaq would not have a husband. At last her family were so angry that they bound her legs together and hanged her down a pit, by a seal thong.

After she was hanged like that, she died and became a hill spirit. Her kidneys became the eyes in her head, her liver became hair, her spleen became a tongue, her heart an ornamental bag on her back, and her intestines the thongs of the bag (to carry children in).

Then, when she had become a hill spirit of this frightful appearance, she burst in upon her parents and frightened them to death.

*Told by ARNALUK.*

### THE GLUTTON

There was once a man who was a great reindeer-hunter and often went hunting. Then he tightened his belly with thongs to make himself light and fleet on his feet.

When he came back from hunting, he cooked meat and began to eat all alone, after having unstrapped his belly; and he went on eating, and at last had to dig a hole in the ground for his stomach; it kept growing bigger and bigger, and when people passed he used to scream—

“Keep far away from my stomach, keep far away from my stomach,” for he was afraid that they would push against it.

When the meat was all gone he would go reindeer-hunting again, and always got many reindeer.

He ate without stopping, and what he could not devour himself, he buried. He never gave anything away.

That is the story of Narrajina, the great eater.

*Told by TATERAQ.*

### ISERAQ, WHO STOLE

They tell of Iseraq that he had only one leg; his other leg was made of the rib of a walrus; but he could run all the same, and they say that he could catch foxes on foot.

He was a great thief and stole from other people's meat-pits; what he had thieved he buried in the ground and covered with stones. Only at night, when other people were asleep, did he bring it home.

But once there was a man who had himself fastened up in a meat-pit, to discover the thief. And when Iseraq came to steal, and thrust his hand inside, he seized him by the wrist and cut off his hand.

“Oh! how my wrist tingles,” was all that Iseraq said. But after that he never stole from meat-pits.

*Told by QISUNGUAQ (young man).*



ARNÁLUK, THE STORY-TELLER



THE ORIGIN OF THE FOG

A hill spirit used to fetch bodies out of the graves and eat them when he got home. A man, who was anxious to discover the thief, caused himself to be buried alive. The hill spirit saw the new grave, opened it, and dragged off the body.

The man had stuck a flat stone under his fur, for fear the spirit should stab him.

As they went he made himself very heavy and caught hold of the willow twigs, so that the spirit had to exert all his strength to carry him.

At last they arrived at his house and he flung him by the thong he had carried him with into the house. But by this time the hill spirit was tired, and he lay down to sleep, and in the meantime the wife went out to gather sticks for the cooking.

"Father, father, he is opening his eyes!" the children began to cry, as the dead man suddenly opened his eyes.

"Nonsense, children, it is a dead body that has caught in the twigs several times on the way," replied the father.

But the man rose up and killed the hill spirit and his children, and ran away.

The hill spirit's wife saw him and thought that it was her husband.

"Where are you going?"

The man did not reply, but only ran on, and the woman, whose suspicions were roused, went after him.

As it was a level plain he was running upon, he called out, "Rise, mounds!" and several mounds rose up.

The hill spirit's wife lost ground when she had to climb uphill.

The fugitive saw a little stream and sprang over it.

"Overflow thy banks, stream!" he called, and then it became impossible to cross.

"How did you get across the brook?" called out the woman.

"I drank the water; just drink it dry."

And the woman began to gulp it up.

The man turned round to her and exclaimed—

“But look at the tail of your fur-coat between your legs.”

And when she bent down to look at it, she burst.

But as she burst, steam rose up from her and became fog, which even now drifts about among the hills.

*Told by AGPALERSSUARSSUK (young man).*

### THE MAN WHO ATE HIS WIVES

They tell of Igimarasugssugssuaq (the Harpoon Point) that he used to fatten up his wives, and eat them when they had grown nicely fat. But every time he became a widower he chanced quickly upon another. At the time when the events of this story came to pass, he was married to one whose name was Arnaqa.

As he was always eating, he grew fatter and fatter, and pieces had to be let into his clothes continually. Among others, he killed his wife's little sister; and his wife had to put the pot over the fire as she dried her tears.

“Cook her and cry for her at the same time,” taunted the man.

“Oh no! I have only got smoke in my eyes,” replied the woman. For see, the wife never ate people, and when she had to cook a human head for her husband, she never ate more than the creatures from the hair; yes, only those, nothing else!

And one day her husband told her to go out and gather sticks, and there was a deep snow outside and they had no meat to cook; and so she knew that it was she herself who was to be cooked.

“People usually cut sticks with a curved knife,” her husband said to her.

“Yes, faggots,” replied the wife, and went out to gather sticks, but the “Great Harpoon Point” had grown so fat by now that he lay on the sleeping-place all the time.

The sun had sunk far down in the heavens, and still his wife had not come back. And so he went to look for her.

“If only the world would grow dark!” called out Arnaqa,

so that it might snow, and it began to snow. And then the man missed her trail, and went home. He could not walk without a prop, so used his harpoon. Then Arnaqa crept into a fox-trap, to see if she could find any food there. And while she was inside she heard the noise of a sledge. It was the owner, come to look at his fox-trap. And when he saw the woman, he ran away, because he thought she was a hill spirit.

"No, I am Arnaqa," she cried, and so he turned back and took her home with him.

"I have eaten a fox," she told him. "I was obliged to run away from my husband, who ate the other people in the village. He wanted to come after me. He is a big man, and fat, so that he takes up a great deal of room; and when he comes in sight in the distance he looks like a whole sledge. I am really telling the truth!"

And one day the man came in sight, and they had trouble to hide her, so that he might be surprised.

"But where shall I be?"

"Up there, up there, on the top of the sleeping-place!" said the others. And so she crawled up there.

Then Igimarasugssugssuaq came. He made his way in through the passage with great difficulty, for it was too narrow for him.

"Oh, one has grown so terribly fat lately, and it is because we have so many walruses in our hunting ground," he lied.

At the same time he looked caressingly at the children in the house.

"Oh, you sweet little ones," he said, for he was seized with such a desire to eat them. And they all agreed that they would sing him insult-songs.

"We can always eat afterwards, let us sing first," said the men in the house, and so one of them began to bind him fast to the support of the house.

"And it is the Great Harpoon Point, who eats the other people in the village!" was the refrain.

And at once he began to call out: "Arnaqa has been telling tales, Arnaqa has been telling tales!"



"Let his wife stab him!" called the people in the house, and then the wife came forward.

But she was afraid of him, and the knife only slipped along his skin. At last it went a long, long way in.

Then the people in the house began to shout: "And now the wife!" for they thought that she ate people too; and so they killed her, although she cried as loudly as she could, "I never ate anything but the lice from the bodies."

Then they cut her up to see what was in her body, and behold! her intestines were full of lice.

And then every one in the house was sorry that they had killed a woman who might have been very useful to them. Yes, this is the end of the story.

*Told by QILERNEQ (an old man of about seventy).*

### THE BABY WHO ATE ITS PARENTS

There was once a baby, feeding at its mother's breast. But suddenly one day it bit off its mother's breast and began to eat her. When there was nothing of her left it killed its father and began to eat him too. The people in the house were awakened by a loud smacking of its lips, and they picked up their clothes and fled.

The baby looked horrible now, with blood all round its mouth. And all at once it began to grow. Its clothes became too small for it, and only came down to its stomach.

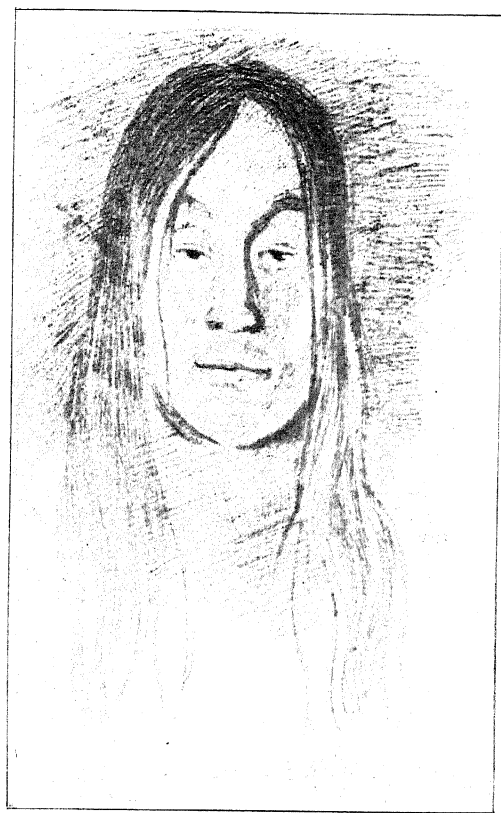
People had fled to the top of a high stone, and stood there struck dumb with horror. And then one of them said—

"Fetch my long knife and you shall have my daughter!"

Then at once a man went down to the house, but he did not dare to go in after he had seen the baby. At last the baby came out of the house and began to look for people, but could not see any one. It crawled along the ground, shouting—

"I ate my parents; I ate my parents, because they would not give me meat."

Then, as it crawled along the ground, not able to see any



ASAYUK



one, the people ran behind it down to the beach and jumped into their umiaqs.

When the baby heard the noise it went after them, and began to walk across the sea; but when it came to a mirror-like strip, it cried, "Oh! a deep chasm!" and turned back.

But the umiaqs escaped.

*Told by TATERAQ.*

### THE LIAR

There was once a man whose name was Qasigiaq; he was a terrible liar. Quite near to him, several brothers had settled, and they had lost their sister.

One day the liar went to pay them a visit, and told them that he had a child who had been named after their sister.

The liar was very greedy of possessions. The men, who were pleased at their sister's name having been given again so soon, made him many presents, which he took home with him.

"How do you come to have all these things?" asked his wife, when he got home.

"Oh! it was a pleasure to them to enrich me," replied the man. He always had such fine words in his mouth, because he was a liar.

But one day it happened that the many brothers came on a visit to see the one who bore their dead sister's name.

"It is the child that we want to see," said they, when they arrived.

"Oh! my husband is so great in his lies," replied the wife, and struck him in the face till his eyes projected. This she did because he told lies.

*Told by ARNALUK.*

Once upon a time a great ship came sailing up to the village where Qasigiaq (the Pied Seal) lived. As usual, he possessed nothing, and did not know how he was going to secure possessions from the great ship. Then he had an idea. He killed his mother and rowed out to the ship. He

had propped her eyes open with spikes from a walrus beard, so that she looked as if she were alive.

When he got out to the ship the seamen went down to him, to look at his companion. They spoke to her, but she did not reply.

"She is so deaf," he explained to them, "that she does not hear what is said to her. Hit her on the side of the head and then she will notice you."

And they struck her, and she tumbled off the seat.

"Oh! you have killed my mother," he said, and began to weep, and the people, who were very sorry for him, gave him gifts, which he rowed home with.

When he came ashore he told his brothers that he had received all those presents for his mother's body.

The brother, who was envious, went in and killed all his children and rowed out to the ship with them. But the people drove him away.

It is also told of the "Pied Seal" that once, on a sledging excursion, he met a white man who had many belongings on his sledge. All that the liar himself had on his sledge was an empty bag.

"Where are you going?" the white man asked him.

"Oh! I am going up to the bottom of a lake up here, to fetch my belongings," replied the "Pied One."

"What do you mean?" asked the stranger.

"Well, you see," answered the liar, "my countrymen, who were angry with me, put me in a bag and threw me out into the lake, and when I got to the bottom I found many wonderful things, and those are what I am going to fetch now."

Then the white man tried to persuade the liar to throw him out into the lake, and Qasigiaq put him in his bag and threw him out. Then he drove home with all his belongings.

This was how he lied and his lies made him rich.

This story we have from the days of our ancestors. It is very old and dates from the time when people were many and had white men among them.

*Told by OSARQAQ.*

## THE MAN WHO REVENGED THE WIDOWS

It was in olden times, in the days when people were still clever at paddling their kayaks. You know that a great sickness once carried off all the older men; the young ones who were left did not know how to build kayaks, and so it came to pass that kayak hunting was quite forgotten for a long time.

But our forefathers had had so much practice that they crossed seas we do not dare to venture upon now. At that time, too, the weather was not so unsettled as it is now, and the winds did not come on so suddenly; they say that there were never rough seas.

In those days at Kangârssuk (C. Parry) there lived a man, Angusínaunguaq, who had a very beautiful wife, whom the men envied him. And one day, when they had decided to sail to the Kitsigsut Islands (Carry Islands), to catch eider-ducks, it was decided that Angusínaunguaq should be left behind on a desolate island, which lay apart.

So they sailed out to the islands, which lie far out in the sea, caught eider-ducks in snares, collected eggs, and were ready to start back; then they pushed off without waiting for Angusínaunguaq, who had gone up to look at his snares, and took his kayak in tow, so that he should never be able to leave the island again.

Then they made haste in towards the mainland.

The way was long.

But when they came in sight of the tents they saw a man going from tent to tent, visiting the women, who had been left behind at the camp. They rowed and came nearer; all the men from the camp had taken part in the bird-catching expedition, and they could not understand who it could be that was paying visits to the tents. An old man who was steering the boat, shaded his eyes from the sun and looked in towards the land.

"The man is Angusínaunguaq!" he said, and he spoke the truth.

Then it turned out that Angusínaunguaq was a great magician. When the umiaqs had left him and he could not find his kayak anywhere, he had bound his body together in a curve with seal-leather thongs, and then, as magicians do, he had charmed strength into himself so that he could travel through the air, and in this way he had arrived at the camp long before the people who had wanted to kill him.

From that day forth they thought no more of trying to steal his wife; nor did they have any cause to regret that they left him alone.

In those days people were many and all countries inhabited. There also lived people out on the Carry Islands; but they were a hostile people and unapproachable. When a kayak from the mainland came near any of their villages, they enveloped it with fog, so that he (the man) could see nothing, and so many lost their way and perished.

And one day Angusínaunguaq determined to avenge his countrymen.

He sailed out to the unapproachable people and surprised them, for he was a great magician, and slew many of the men, cut their heads off and piled them up on the sleeping-place at the side. And when he had accomplished his revenge, he went away.

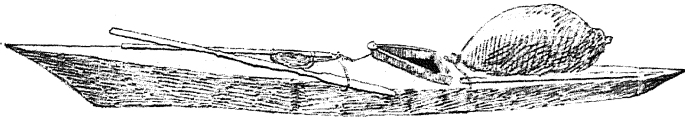
It roused great delight among the widows of the perished kayak-men, when they heard that Angusínaunguaq had avenged their husbands.

*Told by OSARQAQ.*

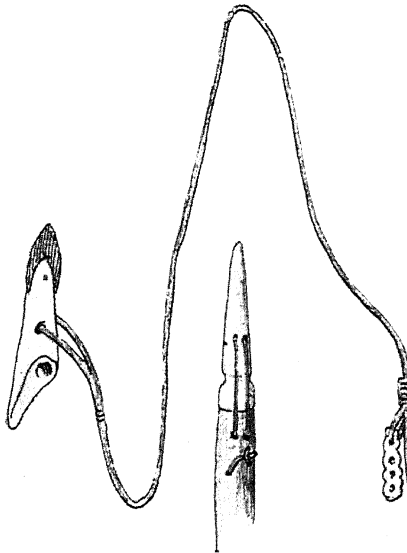
### THE WHITE-HAIRED HAG

Yes, once upon a time—the same old story—there was a man who beat his wife. Yes, and of course she ran away from him, and she took her child with her,—a little one that she carried on her back—and then she set out on her journey with her little one.

Then she came across a great house, a house with two rooms and a passage in; but there were no people about, and



KAYAK



HARPOON POINT AND POLE





so she went in. A little lamp was burning inside, and an old woman lay there asleep; she was lying on her back, and she was sleeping in the daytime because she was an old woman. She had to see that the lamp did not go out. But her big sons were out hunting.

The fugitive took off her kamiks and began to dry them. Then she heard a peculiar rattling noise. She sprang up, looked round, and saw the old woman creeping towards her. She just snatched up her kamiks and ran off as fast as she could. The old hag ran after her, and came nearer and nearer. Then the woman threw her little one from her, and the old hag struck at the baby's throat with her axe. She was anxious to get something to eat.

Then the woman went again home and met her husband driving.

"But where is your child?" asked the man.

"I lost it when the white-haired old hag was pursuing me."

"You lie; I will kill you."

"Very well; but let me show you the old hag first," replied the woman, and they went off together.

And when they got there they found her asleep again.

The man went in.

He seized a large axe which was just above the sleeper and planted it in her throat.

She sat up. "Ou-u-u-uh!" she gasped, and then she died.

Then the man settled down to wait till her children should return. And they came in sight dragging reindeer on their backs, and as they came near, they called out—

"Mother, we have got you skins to lie and rest yourself upon!"

One of them came in along the passage. The man cut his throat and threw him on one side.

And then there came another, and then another, and he cut at their throats.

But when blood began to flow from inside the house out in the passage, three escaped.

Then the man and his wife took as much reindeer meat as they could carry and went home.

*Told by QILERNEQ.*

### THE MAN WHO WENT TRAVELLING TO LOOK FOR HIS SON

There was once upon a time, in the days of our ancestors, a man who started to travel along the coast through different countries to look for his son. His son had gone out in his kayak and had not returned.

One day he saw a giant at the edge of a large glacier and rowed up to him. When he had entered the house, the glacier giant brought out a drum, a lovely drum with the fell made of a man's stomach, and the giant then prepared to give the man this drum, but began to tremble violently from head to foot, for he was seized with such a frightful desire to eat the man there and then.

Just then, too, large salmon began to fall down through a hole in the roof, and the man was so afraid that he could hardly eat, and he could not get out.

But as he was a great magician, he called upon his helping spirits. His helping spirits were large grampuses.

"Grampuses, grampuses! come, my helping spirits, show yourselves; they want to eat me."

And the grampuses showed themselves, and the house was crushed and the giant killed, and then the man journeyed farther to look for his son.

Then he saw a big man again, and the big man did nothing but eat human beings; their kayaks he threw down in a deep chasm in the rocks. The man paddled up to the giant. When he had come up to him, the man-eater showed him a deep chasm and said, "Just look down there!" and when the man looked down, he tried to throw him over backwards into the chasm.

But the man seized the man-eater's leg and flung him down, and after that he went on.



MOTHER, WITH CHILD IN AMAUT (CARRYING-BAG)



And, as he paddled on he heard a seal's bone cry out: "Take away the moss that has collected round the hole that goes through me,"—and he did so, and went on.

Another time he heard, down in the sea, a shell-fish cry out—

"The shell-fish wants you down at the bottom with it; paddle your kayak down through the water, down here."

The shell-fish wanted to eat him, but he took no notice of it.

Then at last one day he saw an old woman, and he paddled up to her and got out.

"Let me dry your boots!" said she, and took them and hung them up so high that he could not reach them. The man wanted to lie down and go to sleep, but could not sleep, for fear.

"Bring me my kamiks!" for it turned out that she was a man-eater; he seized hold of his kamiks, and fled down to his kayak with the old hag in pursuit.

"If I could only flay the man down there."

And the kayak nearly capsized.

"If I could only send my arrow through her up there."

And when the kayak-man had said this, she fell down and bent up her knife. And so he went on. On his way he caught sight of a man and paddled up to him.

"Look at the skin that I have got spread out!" the man called out to him, and the kayak-man at once recognised his son's kayak—the son himself the stranger had eaten, and now he had spread out his skin. The kayak-man went ashore and trampled the man-eater to death, so that every bone in his body was ground to powder.

And then he went home again.

*Told by ANARFWIK.*

## ATUNGAIT, WHO WENT VISITING

It is told of the great Atungait that he once took it into his head that he would like to go on a journey by sledge with a strong woman. He had the skin of a bearded seal

flayed, and forbade his wife to scrape the fleshy side, so that the skin might be as thick as possible; and he had it dried like that.

Later on in the winter he went on a visit to a tribe who were celebrated for their fondness for playing football. There he stayed for some time, watching, during their play, for which of them was the strongest. And, as he noticed that among the players there was a woman, small of stature, who always got the ball from her opponents, he gave her the large, thick skin, to rub soft. And she did what no other woman had been able to do. So he took her on his sledge and drove out on a visit to other countries.

On their way they came to a steep, high cliff; round about it was open water. Then Atungait sprang out on the rock and ran up; and so strong was he that at every step his foot sank far into the rock.

On the top he called to his dogs; one by one they followed in his footsteps and came up; there was only one who fell down and died. After that he hoisted up first his sledge, then the woman, after which he drove on.

When they had driven for an hour they came to people; and the strange part of it was that they were all left-handed. Then they drove further and came to cannibals; they ate each other, because they had nothing else to eat.

But they did not succeed in "eating Atungait to harm."

Then they went further and came to people who all had dislocation of the hips; they were born like that. They lay about all day and played Ajangait (the Eskimo game of throwing and catching). And they had a very beautiful Ajangait of copper.

Atungait remained there for some time, and when he was about to leave again, he stole their game and drove away. Before that he had destroyed all their sledges.

As the lame people could not go in pursuit of him, they enchanted some stones, that raced across the ice after the departing guests.

Atungait heard something that sounded like the ripple

of a brook, looked round, and discovered the stones, rolling after him.

"Have you any bits of sole leather?" he asked his woman, and she had.

He tied them to a cord and let it drag after the sledge. When the stones reached it, they stopped suddenly, and sank down through the ice. And, as they drove on, freed from danger, they heard the lame people calling after them: "Bring us our game; give us our copper back again!"

But, by now Atungait had grown homesick; and as he did not know whereabouts in the country he was, he told the woman who was with him to wait, and flew away himself through the air. He was a great magician.

He soon found his house, and peeped in through the window: there sat his wife, rubbing her nose against a strange man's! It was her caress.

"That nose does not seem likely to wear out just at present—hu!" he shouted in through the window.

The woman rushed out of the house, when she heard that, and met her husband.

"So you have grown good to kiss!" said her husband to her.

"No—not at all! I have not kissed any one!" she made haste to reply. Then Atungait seized her roughly and killed her, because she had told a lie. Then the strange man came out and Atungait went straight up to him.

"You were kissing in there!" said he.

"Yes!" replied the stranger; and so Atungait let him live, for he had told the truth.

After that he flew back to the strong woman and made her his wife.

*Told by QILERNEQ.*

## THE MAN WHO WAS BLOWN AWAY BY THE STORM

Men once killed the husband of a woman with child. Then, as a widow, she gave birth to the child, and it was a boy. She took the child and laid it in her meat dish, which was filled with



water, and said over it : "Thou shalt be a bearded seal ! A bearded seal shalt thou be !"

Later on she carried it down to the sea, dipped it in the waves, and said, "Thou shalt destroy thy enemies !"

"Shall I not be a bearded seal ?" asked the child.

"Yes ! thou shalt be a bearded seal," replied the mother.

At last the child could dive far down and swim, even when there was a heavy sea on.

One day the mother said to it : "Thou shalt swim up to thy enemies and change to a bearded seal. I will watch thee from the rocks."

And so he swam out, and dived, and came up in front of them ; and behold ! the fever of the chase seized them, and they flung themselves down in their kayaks and began to follow the bearded seal, which came up to the surface now in front of them, now behind them, just under the stern of the kayaks. At last they were out in the open water far from land, and all at once the bearded seal cried out, "My breath is going, unga !" and then it began to weep, because it could hardly get its breath. Then a storm came on, and the waves of the sea rose high, up towards the sky. The kayaks began to go round and round. Some of them tried to find shelter behind an iceberg, and amongst them was Qivioq. He grew afraid and said, "Who will tempt fate with me ?" "I !" there was one who replied, and so they rowed in towards land. Qivioq rowed backwards, and behind them you could hear his amulet shrieking "Pst ! pst !" It was a black guillemot.

In this way they got to land and went ashore. There they found a woman whom Qivioq made his wife. When they had stayed there some time Qivioq went on further along the coast to look for people. When he had rowed a little way he met with people. But they began to play with his hunting-buoy and to throw it up in the air, so that he soon left them again.

On his way he came to a woman whose name was Eqaitdloq ; there he settled down, and took her daughter to wife. Eqaitdloq herself had a husband made of wood ; but he was able to go out on the sea and hunt white whales and whales.



KNUD RASMUSSEN (NEW YEAR'S EVE, 1903)



Then, when Qivioq had married into the family, he went with him on his hunting journeys. One day that they were out seal-catching together, Eqaitdloq killed her daughter, because she envied her her husband. Then she flayed her, and drew the skin over herself.

When Qivioq came home he asked for the daughter. "Oh! she has gone out to pluck berries," said the mother. She had thrust her body under the sleeping-place. But, as Qivioq despised the mother, he left her and went away. On his way home he came to a big sea, which he crossed, and a short time afterwards he was at home. But on his arrival he found his wife married to another man, because he had stayed away so long; and so he was obliged to be satisfied to sleep alone on the side sleeping-place.

And here ends this story.

*Told by QISUNGAQ.*

## THE GREAT FIRE

It is told that once upon a time a great drum-dance was held at the house of Umerdlugtôq (the Broad-nosed).

All the children had been shut up in a house next door, and amongst them was an orphan, Kâvssagssuk.

Now when the children were left to themselves they made a great noise inside the house. The orphan had gone out.

"Silence! Be quiet! the Great Fire is in sight; he is coming near!" he shouted in through the window; but no one believed him; they were all children, you see, and very incredulous. At last the orphan came in. "I should so like to get a few pieces of meat that I have up there," he lied; "help me up!" He wanted to get up on some skins that were spread out to dry under the ceiling; so he got up there and hid himself.

Suddenly a bright light flamed up in front of the house: the Great Fire was beginning to enter the house. In his hand he had a large whip, which was made of a whole bearded seal.

Only then did the children believe; but soon there were

none of them left, for the Great Fire burnt them all up. When he was ready to go out again, he pointed his finger a few times up towards the skin that was spread out under the ceiling, and went; and then he flew away in the air towards the sky.

Then the orphan went and related what had happened to the many people, but no one believed him.

"It is thou who hast murdered them," they said.

"Very well! then, shout and make a noise and we shall see," replied the orphan.

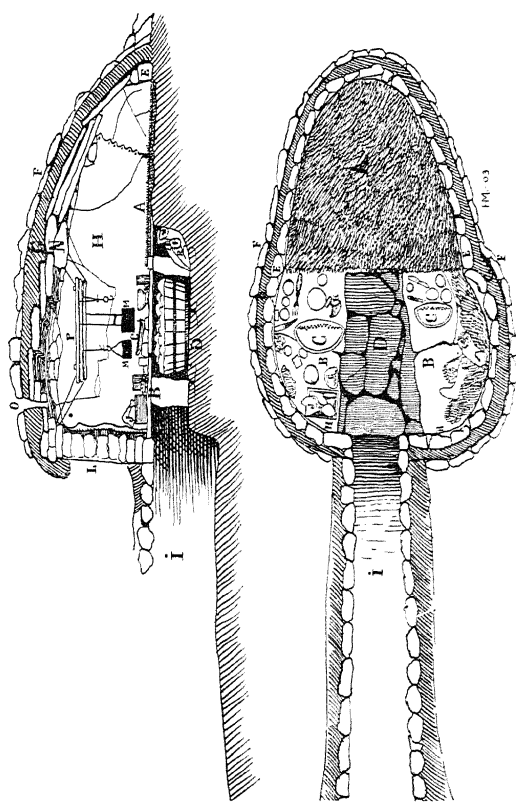
So they boiled a great deal of train-oil and began to make a noise, and the Great Fire came in sight again; but the orphan hid in a meat-pit. The people inside the house then hung a large pot filled with the boiling oil up over the doorway; and when the fire monster tried to get in, they cut the cord by which the pot hung and the boiling oil upset over the Great Fire and scalded him frightfully, and then he went away. From that day forth the orphan was not allowed to go in Umerdlugtôq's house; he was always obliged to stay outside.

After this our ancestors forbade their children to shout and make a great noise.

*Told by AGPALINGUAQ (young man).*

## THE ORPHAN WHO DRIFTED OUT TO SEA

There was once an orphan boy who drifted out to sea on an ice-floe, and arrived among strange people. They took him into their service at once and used him for all their menial work. But he had a brother who was a great magician, and who, when the little one did not come back, began to look for him in soul-flights. When he had found the country in which his brother was, and saw that people were unkind to him, he started at once to build himself a very quick-sailing umiaq. When he tried the new boat, he found that it sailed more swiftly than the long-tailed duck, which is considered the fastest-flying among birds; and so he pushed off from the shore cheerily, and steered for the unknown.



PLAN AND ELEVATION OF AN ESKIMO HUT



When they came in sight of land they had to row with oars flat on the water, that they might not go too fast.

When they came near the shore, his little brother up among the houses shouted out, "My big brother!" But his brother went up to him and said, "Hush! pretend that I am a stranger to you," and then he went into the house and no one knew that the new arrival was the brother of the orphan, and the people made him slave, just as they had done before.

"Take that out!" said one of the people in the house, pointing to a large pot. The orphan took it and was going to carry it outside; but when he went past his brother, the brother took it from him and poured the contents out on the floor. A foul smell filled the hut, for there was filth in the pot. The people in the house rushed to the door to get out and shouted all at once, "Nice strangers! well-mannered strangers!"

Outside they began to build up the entrance, so that the man should be walled in.

"Before you do that, give me the skin I sit on in the boat," said the man, and they gave it him. In it was the skin of a lemming, and he brought it to life by magic, so that it ate a hole through the wall of the house. Those who had built him in, however, had in the meantime begun to play football as though nothing had happened, and he could hear them shouting and shrieking outside. Suddenly the noise ceased, and soon after the lemming came back; but the one side of its mouth was covered with blood.

The game of ball began again, and again he sent the lemming out. Just as before, the shouting ceased, and soon the lemming came back, this time with both sides of its mouth covered with blood.

The men outside then began to suspect that the man they had walled in was a magician, and they made haste to pull down the entrance, and went in to him. "Yes! you see; he there is my brother," he said, pointing to the orphan, and then they understood that he had come to avenge him. Two



men had been killed by the lemming, and they were anxious to be friends with him, but he wished to go home, and invited them to go with him.

Two umiaqs offered themselves as an escort and they started ; but when they had got out to sea, the man with the swift boat dragged behind ; he did this to deceive them, making his rowers row with oars flat on the water.

Every evening he came to land much later than they, and complained of the difficulty he had had to keep up with them.

In the boats of his companions there sat a couple of big strong women, and it was they whom he had taken a fancy to carry off.

“ Can you not give us the two girls to help us ? ” he proposed. “ Unless you do, we really cannot keep up ! ” And the others agreed to the proposal.

Hardly had he got the girls into his boat, than he made his rowers hold their oars in the usual way, and soon they had disappeared from sight.

When they had rowed a little way, they saw a great wave coming after them ; it had been sent by their enemies. “ Shut your eyes ! ” called out the magician to his rowers. All of them shut their eyes, and the wave did them no harm.

They rowed a little way farther, then they suddenly saw a great rock in front of them. “ Shut your eyes ! ” called the magician again, and his magic power again helped them over the difficulties that their enemies had prepared for them.

This was how he stole the two girls.

When he got home, he began at once to try his brother's strength : he beat him with a great whip, till he fell down, and in this way he hardened his muscles. So that it was not long before the little one became as strong as a giant, and then his brother gave him the two girls to wife.

He began immediately to amuse himself by ill-treating them ; once he hit one of them till he broke her collar-bone and her one shoulder drooped, and both girls often wept with home-sickness. At last they each gave birth to a child. As they walked about with their little babies in their arms,



IGGIENGUAQ, A VERY HANDSOME ESKIMO TYPE



they hummed to them, and told them of their native land, and of their relations.

"It will not be long before they come with dainty reindeer fat for you!" they told them.

But their relations never came to fetch them.

*Told by INALUK (middle-aged woman).*

### THE ORPHAN WHO BECAME A GIANT

Once upon a time there was a little orphan boy whose name was Kâvssagssuk. He slept in the passage, among the dogs, and warmed himself on the roof, by the air-hole through which the warm air streamed out. When the dogs in the passage were beaten, they would strike Kâvssagssuk too. They gave him no other food than walrus skin, which he could not chew, because they amused themselves by pulling his teeth out.

A man of the name of Umerdlugtôrssuaq (the "Great Broad-nosed One") used to have great fun with him, and would lift him up by his nostrils, and shake him well; this made his nostrils bigger and bigger.

He had two grandmothers: the one, his father's mother, beat him whenever she saw him; but the other, his mother's mother, dried his foot-wear; for she was sorry for him, because he was the child of her daughter, who was a woman like herself.

When the light came, and the nights were dark no longer, Kâvssagssuk went off on a journey on foot; and he met a big man, who stood on the beach by the tide belt, flensing. And he began to shout for meat; but it only rang in the ears of the giant. At last the giant heard what the boy said.

"Here, I will give you meat," said the giant, and threw to him without looking at him; the orphan could hardly drag it away, it was so much, and so he made himself a meat-pit.

The day after, he wanted to go and look at his meat-pit, and when he could not find it, he burst out crying. The giant caught sight of the little fellow standing there crying, and said: "Well, is it the meat? I thought it belonged to some one

else; it was I who took it. But shall we not go for a little walk together?" He was so anxious to console the little fellow. And so they went.

Then the giant started to run and pushed a large stone on the one side, so that it began to spin round and round. "And now you," said he, to amuse Kâvssagssuk, and he ran up and tried to push the stone, but only fell down. "Try again, and then again!" but the little one found it quite impossible to do it. "And now again, go on trying," and at last he really managed to make the stone spin round. Then they tried bigger stones, and at last Kâvssagssuk could make great rocks spin round.

"Now go home," said the giant to him; "I will send you meat; three bears shall come to your village in the winter." And so Kâvssagssuk went home. Down by the houses he went up to the umiak of his tormentor, which was frozen fast in the ice. He tore it up with one wrench, and then he went inside and lay down amongst the dogs.

The next day the Broad-nosed One was uneasy when he saw that the umiak had been torn up. "I wonder who can have done that?" he said; "we must have a giant amongst us; perhaps it is you there," said he, and he pointed to Kâvssagssuk, to make fun of him.

One day later in the winter, as Kâvssagssuk was sitting barefooted inside, having his kamiks dried, there was a shout that three bears were in sight; none of the dogs dared attack them, because they were so big and strong.

His tormentor shouted in through the windows to him to mock him.

"Oh! if I only had a weapon; lend me a pair of short indoor kamiks!" said the orphan, and his cousin Sorqardluk lent them to him.

Then he sprang out, down to the edge of the ice, and the hard snow flew up round him as he ran.

"Only look at Kâvssagssuk," called out the people; "he is mad, he has gone mad." Then he ran up to the bears. First he seized the mother, and wrung her neck; he then seized her

grown-up cubs by the throats, and dashed their heads together, that they grew rigid. The mother he flung over his shoulder and the cubs he took under his arms. They seemed to weigh nothing, and in this way he carried them up.

But his old tormentor was very busy, and now he fled with his two wives.

Then Kâvssagssuk made himself a very large pot, and piled up firewood and made a fire. He put huge pieces of bear's flesh in the pot. But the old grandmother who used to beat him he seized and threw into the fire. She was burnt right up; the only thing that was left of her was her stomach.

The other grandmother was about to run away too, but her he held back, saying, "You always dried my kamiks!"

Kâvssagssuk then wanted to pursue his tormentor, and his cousin went with him.

The Broad-nosed One had stopped in his flight off a steep cliff, where he had set up his tent. There they took turns to keep watch, for they expected the pursuers. But at last they had all fallen asleep.

When Kâvssagssuk came near to their tent they were all lying asleep. So he seized hold of his old tormentor by his nostrils, and carried him out to the edge of the cliff, and gave him a good shaking over the precipice. When he put him down on the ground again, both nostrils were split, and he could do nothing but hold his hands to his face, but Kâvssagssuk went and knocked over the tent, saying—

"Umerdlugtôrssuaq, now I shall take your wives!" and so he carried them off, but his old tormentor died of the wounds in his nose.

When he got back, Kâvssagssuk revenged himself on all those who had ill-treated him before, and then he went away to the people who live in the south.

It is told that down there he made himself a kayak, and went out fishing with the men, but his tremendous strength brought with it a strong desire to terrify people, and when he began to squeeze children's bodies till their intestines came

out, his fellow-fishermen harpooned him one day, on a kayak expedition, and killed him.

That is what we have heard tell.

*Told by QILERNEQ.*

### MITSIMA, WHO FROZE TO DEATH

The people who came to this country from the other side of the sea told me what I am now going to narrate to you.

Once upon a time there was a very old man, whose name was Mitsima ; he was out seal-catching with many others in the middle of winter when a snow-storm came on and prevented them seeing anything. The seal-catchers lost each other, and the sledges drove home without finding the old man.

But when the storm was over, old Mitsima came into sight ; he came crawling along the ice like a dog, for his hands and feet had been frozen.

His children saw him coming, but not one of them dared to go to meet him. They were afraid of him, because he was almost dead. At the entrance to the house, he collapsed.

"Oh ! he is an old man after all," said his children, and let him die out there.

Afterwards they went out and covered him with snow.

That is how old Mitsima died.

*Told by INALUK.*

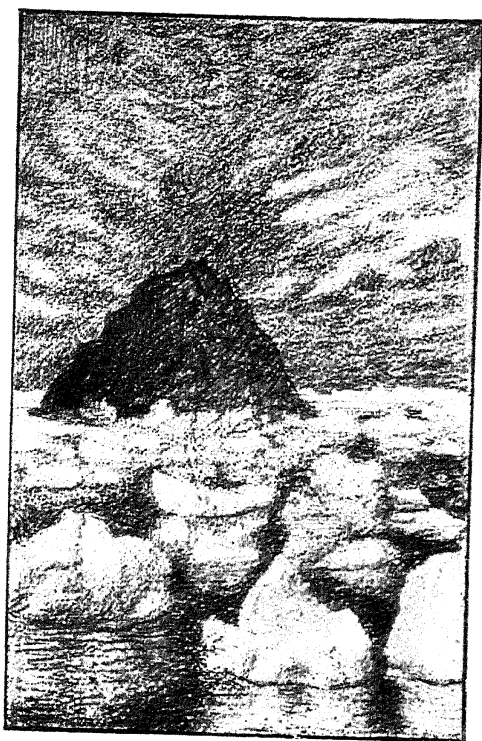
### KUMAGDLAK, WITH THE LIVING ARROWS

It is related of Kumagdlak that he lived in a place by himself. A wife he had, and she was the only other who lived there.

One day his wife was out seeking stones to make a hearth, and, looking out to sea, she saw many enemies approaching.

"Umiaqs and kayaks !" she called out to her husband. And the man was very disturbed in his mind, for he was lying ill with a bad leg.

"My arrows ! Here with my arrows !" called he to his



DALRYMPLE ROCK





wife. And the woman saw that all the arrows were shaking, without being touched ; that was because they had bone points made from the small of men's legs. And they shook, because their master was uneasy.

Kumagdlak had made himself arrows that all had birds' feathers at the end.

He was a great magician, and when he breathed on these feathers, he could make them alive, so that the arrows flew towards his enemies and killed them. And when he himself was exposed to the weapons of his enemies, he seized the thong of the bag his mother had carried him in on her back when he was a baby, and hit out with it ; then all the arrows swerved aside from him.

The enemies beached their boats, and the oldest of them called out : " Kumagdlak ! Now you shall go and taste the water in the country of the dead beneath the earth ; or will you perhaps fly up to heaven ? "

" I think you will go first," replied Kumagdlak.

He stood by the entrance to his tent and strained his bow. The first arrow was only to whistle across, above the umiaqs ; if it did that, no one would be able to harm him. He shot, and the arrow flew above the boats. Then he aimed at the old man who had spoken, and he shot through the string of his bow and spitted him. Then he began to shoot the others down. His wife handed him the arrows as he was ready for them.

The men from the kayaks and the umiaqs down below shot at him, but all their arrows swerved aside. His enemies grew fewer and fewer, and at last they took to flight.

Then Kumagdlak took all the bodies, and plundered them of their knives ; and when the umiaqs were out in the open sea he raised a storm, so that they all perished.

But the waves tossed the bodies backwards and forwards against the coast, and tore off all the clothes from them.

Here ends this story.

*Told by NIVIGKANA (an old woman).*

## MEETINGS WITH STRANGE TRIBES

### NAKED PEOPLE WITH FEATHERS

It is related of great Qitdlaq, the man who led the people from the other side of the sea over to us, that once on a seal-catching expedition over in his own country he and a companion were overtaken by a storm and driven out to sea.

They drifted about on the sea for a long time, until a landward wind carried them in to a coast they did not know. They followed the coast-line, and the only thing they had to eat was ptarmigan.

When they had been walking for some time, they came to a very peculiar people, who rushed out on the ice every time they came out of their houses: they seemed to be expecting an enemy. They avoided these people, and continued their way through the country, coming down to the sea-shore only to look out for people.

Again they came to a very peculiar tribe, who were terrible to look at: they wore no clothes, but had feathers on their bodies.

Then Qitdlaq was unable to withhold his companion from them. He went down, because he would not be guided by the other's counsels, and was immediately surrounded.

"Are you alone? Have you a companion?"

"He is up in the mountains," replied the comrade, and when he had given this reply, they fell upon him and killed him and flensed him with long knives; but at the same time they raised a wind from the rocks, so that they could scent out the hiding-place of his companion.

Just then Qitdlaq, who even at that time was a great magician, raised a snow-storm, with piercing cold, and the



BOY OF THIRTEEN TO FOURTEEN



snow whirled down the cliffs till all his pursuers were frozen to death.

That was how he saved himself from his enemies and reached home again.

*Told by QISUNGUAQ.*

### THE REINDEER-HUNTERS WHO NEVER CAME BACK

People over in Akilineq, the country on the other side of the sea, often did not return when they went out reindeer-hunting. So once upon a time a man went out to look for the missing ones, and in among the hills he caught sight of a strange-looking man coming straight towards him. The stranger was not a coast-man. The reindeer-hunter flung himself flat on his face to hide himself; the stranger kept straight on towards him, and at last was quite close to him.

The hunter was positively shaking with fright.

But while the stranger had his back turned to him for a moment, he shot him with one of those arrows with hooks which never come out unless they are cut out. The stranger started to run away, but the more he ran the farther the arrow worked itself into his body.

The hunter ran in the opposite direction and got home safely.

It is told of another man who was likewise out reindeer-hunting, and likewise alone, that he too had met a man who looked different from the people he was accustomed to see. To hide himself, he had flung himself flat on the ground. The stranger, who was unusually tall, looked behind him and uttered a sound, a curious sharp sound, that carried up into the hills.

It turned out afterwards that he had an instrument with which he made this sound.

Then a man, of the same appearance as himself, came in sight a little way behind him and walked up to him.

They went together to a place whence they had a view over the sea, and they sat down on a stone close by the reindeer-hunter. There they sat, talking together, and pointed now and again out to sea, perhaps at kayaks.

When they had sat there a little time, they went their way again, still without discovering the hunter, who fled home.

The day after, the hunter and some of his tribe went up to examine the stones they had been sitting upon; they proved to be very large, not small, as the reindeer-hunter had thought: so big had the men been. But who the men were and where their country was, no one knew.

*Told by PANIGPAK (middle-aged man).*

### THE INLAND-DWELLER

There were once two men who, on a reindeer-hunt, saw an inland-dweller carrying a whole bearded seal on his back. They started in pursuit of him, and every time he rested they lay down flat on the ground, so that he should not see them. At last he came to a stop on a big plain, threw the seal on the ground, and went straight down into the earth. The men followed after him, and they could hear his wife flensing the seal. They had gone down into the passage, and were standing close to the door, watching the inland-dweller inside the house. As his wife stooped over the seal to flay it, they saw that the lower part of her body was like a dog's, and this looked so funny that they burst out laughing, and the inland-dweller heard it, inside the house.

"Was that you?" asked the man.

"No; was it not you?" replied the woman.

"No!" And then they grew excited, and as they had eaten liver, wanted to consult the spirits (qilanialeqisut).

When the medium was heavy, the inland-dweller said—

"Those who carry bows are in the neighbourhood. Let them lose power over their bodies."

They called coast-people "those who carried bows." And the two outside in the passage began to lose power over their bodies, and were obliged to crawl out. Outside they began to roll over and over, and they had just hidden themselves when the inland-dweller started in pursuit of them. They had hidden themselves in a little hollow under the midden. As the inland-



ESKIMO TYPE





dweller did not find them, he went in again. They then rolled farther along the plain, and when they had got a long way from the inland-dweller, they were able to get up and escape home.

*Told by TÂTERÂQ.*

#### SUAGUK, WHO MARRIED AN INLAND-DWELLER

It is told of Suagak that she lived on the coast. But one day, when she was out walking, an inland-dweller came up to her and carried her off. He took her with him home, up in the interior of the country: there he had his house. Suagak began to cry, but when the inland-dweller spoke to her she stopped.

"I have great stores of food hidden away in the rocks. We shall have plenty to eat, we two. And I will make you my wife, for I have none."

When they had walked a little way, they came to his flesh-pit, and began to eat. There were many delicious things: the dried flesh of bearded seal and narwhals. He was a good seal-catcher, for he only needed to call his prey to him.

Then they went on farther, far up country, and every time they came to one of his flesh-pits, they had a very good meal.

At last they got to his house: it was a hole dug right down into the ground; there was no raised sleeping-place in the room, but it was all on a level with the floor. Inside the house was the inland-dweller's grandmother, a very old woman.

So Suagak became the inland-dweller's wife; and when it got about, the inland-dweller's fellow-countrymen came to look at her, and they found her different from the other women they knew, and thought her beautiful.

At last the old woman was obliged to ask them to go away, for the poor wife was so embarrassed.

The inland-dwellers did not have their cooking-pots hung up; they only stood on the ground. So Suagak took them and hung them up, and they were so pleased at that, that for a long time they amused themselves by pushing them backwards and forwards.

At last Suagak gave birth to a child, and after that she began to want to see her own countrymen, and she spoke about it to her husband. When the child was big enough to be carried on the back, they set out, for she was anxious to see her brothers.

When they came down near the houses, the inland-dweller did not want to go any farther, but said he would wait for her up among the hills, for he was afraid of the dogs.

"When you hear me call, Make haste, make haste! from up here, you must come," he said, and sat down on the brow of a field.

But Suagak went down to the houses, and there was great delight there, for they all thought that she was dead long ago; they had already named a little child after her.

Her brothers then thought that they would like to see her husband, and went up to him; but as he was not willing to go with them, they seized him by the arms, and one of them pushed him behind, and thus they dragged him home with them. When he got into the house, he fled straight up on the sleeping-place, as far back as he could get, and his eyes grew big with fright. At last his brothers-in-law had pity on him, took their dogs far away, and fastened them up. Then, as there was no longer anything that he was afraid of, the brothers-in-law went out seal-catching; the inland-dweller likewise went out hunting. He followed the tide-line along the coast, and returned with a whole bearded seal on his back.

The brothers-in-law used to take the little one on their laps and say to it in jest—

"Little inland-dweller, little inland-dweller, that never goes in a kayak!" Then, when the kayaks came home again, the inland-dweller went to meet them and said—

"The little inland-dweller who never goes in a kayak has brought soup-meat for the house."

And so there was great delight, and they ate as much as they could. The day after, they went out seal-catching all together, and this time the inland-dweller came home with as many gulls as he could carry. You see, he was an inland-

dweller, and only needed to beckon to his prey with his forefinger.

But one day the inland-dweller grew home-sick, and so they went home. When they got home, he told his friends that he had seen some very dangerous monsters that he had been very much afraid of; but what else he was to call them he did not know, as he had never seen dogs before.

This is the end of the story of Suagak, who married an inland-dweller.

*Told by TÂTERÂQ.*

### THE GIANT DOG

There was once a man who had a giant dog; it could swim in the sea, and was so big that it could drag whales and narwhals to land. The narwhals it just hung on its grinders, when it wanted to swim to land with them.



The man who owned it had cut holes in its jaws and fastened thongs to the holes; so he just pulled at these thongs when he wanted it to turn.

When they wished to go on a journey, he and his wife sat on its back.

The man had long wished for a son, but as he could not get one, he gave his dog the amulet that the child should have had.

It was a knot of wood from a tree, and it was to make the dog hard against death.

Then one day the dog ate a person, so the man had to go away and settle down elsewhere. One day while he was living in that place a kayak came in sight a long way off, and the man had to make haste and hide his dog, so that it should not eat the stranger. He led it a long way up in the hills, and gave it a large bone that it could gnaw and amuse itself with.

But one day the dog smelt the stranger, all the same, and came down from the hills; and its master then had to hide the man and his kayak far away, so that the dog should not tear them to pieces; so dangerous was it.

But as it was so large and so ferocious, its master made many enemies, and one day there came a strange man in a sledge with three dogs as large as bears, to kill the giant dog. The man went to meet the sledge with the dog after him. At first it pretended to be afraid, and only when the strange dogs made for it did it fling itself upon them and bite through the skulls of all three.

At last the man noticed that the giant dog used to disappear occasionally on long excursions inland, and sometimes it came back with the leg of an inland-dweller. Then he understood that it attacked the inland-dwellers, and brought its master their legs. That they were the legs of inland-dwellers he could tell by their having boots on with long hairs.

From this giant dog dates the great terror which the inland-dwellers have of dogs. It always used to show itself suddenly in the opening of the window and haul them out. But it was a very good thing for the inland-dwellers to get a little fright sometimes, for they were very much given to carrying off people who were alone, especially women who had lost their way in the fog.

Now I do not know any more about the giant dog.

*Told by MAJAJQ.*



QULUTA: BOY OF NINE



## THE INLAND-DWELLERS AT ETÂ

A sledge came driving east of Etâ, inland, to the big lake, when the dogs began to sniff; and they set off at a gallop across a great plain. Suddenly they came to a halt and poked their noses down into the ground. And then it turned out that it was the entrance to an inland-dweller's house.

The inland-dwellers screamed with fear when they saw the dogs, and pushed out an old woman, while escaping inside themselves. She died of fright when she saw the dogs.

The man then went in, and was very distressed at having caused the death of the old woman.

"It is a great pity that you should lose the old woman through my fault."

"Oh! it does not matter. Her skin was wrinkled; it does not matter," replied the inland-dwellers.

Then the sledges drove home, but the inland-dwellers had had such a thorough fright that they fled far away inland.

Since then nothing has been seen of them. The remains of their house was all that could be found, and this was dug up, so as to discover something if possible, and they did find the tusk of a narwhal.

The inland-dwellers are not dangerous; they are only so timid and so afraid of dogs.

A coast-dweller, Suagak, had taken a husband among the inland-dwellers, and when her husband had to visit his brothers-in-law, the blood sprang out of his eyes on seeing the dogs.

They practise fast running, because they often catch foxes. When an inland-dweller is to be a fast runner, they put him in the skin of a bearded seal filled with worms, so that only his head sticks out. Then the worms suck all his blood, and it is said that that makes him very fleet. At Etâ my father saw a Little Auk's skin, stuffed with worms. It had been left behind by the inland-dwellers. There are still inland-dwellers at Etâ, but they have gone a very long way inland.

*Told by ARNALUK.*



## THE MAN WHO PIERCED HIS WIFE'S LEGS

There was once a man named Neruvkaq, and he had a wife named Navarana, who belonged to the "tuneq" people. She had many brothers and was the only sister. The brothers' names were Takuvfalik, Takuvfaq, Mingume, Mingusaq, Paeme, Pausange, Qulegat, Maujo, Qatitunak, and their father's Usangana. They lived at Natsivilik, where there is a large stone that people put meat upon.

But Neruvkaq ill-treated his wife badly; he used to drive a drill into her shins, and when the drill reached the bone, she snorted with pain.

"Do not touch me; I have many brothers," she said to her husband.

"Fetch them; let them murder me," replied the husband.

As he continued to ill-treat her, at last she ran away to her brothers, who were inland dwellers (tunerssuit).

Then they all started towards Natsilivik. And when they arrived they sprang up on the roof of Neruvkaq's house and began to trample on it. The legs of one of them went through, and Neruvkaq's brother cut it off at the joint.

"He has cut my leg off," they heard him say, and then he hopped round on one leg till he fell down from loss of blood.

But Neruvkaq made haste to put on his fur-coat. It was a fur-coat he had had when he was little, and which had been enlarged as he grew. And then it was sewn all over with walrus teeth. No one could hurt him while he had it on.

Then he wanted to get out of the house, so put the dog his seal-skin fur on, and pushed it outside. The men outside thought that it was Neruvkaq himself, and they stabbed it.

He himself came just behind and sprang up on the high stone which is used to place meat upon. Such strength was

there in his leap that you can still see on the stone the marks of his feet. Then he seized his arrows, which all had barbs of walrus tusks, and began to shoot them down.

His mother charmed strength into him.

Soon there were not many of his enemies left, and the survivors ran away.

They went south, and went on running, and did not rest till they had got south of Cape York. And only at Navdlortoq (Cape Melville) did they sleep (altogether a distance of some 136 miles).

But Navarana, who had by now grown very much afraid of her husband, dug her way in under the sleeping-place, and hid herself there. As she would not come out, her husband pushed in a large piece of walrus flesh to her, and she had a very good meal.

"Come out—come out; I will never hurt you again," he said to her; but she had grown so afraid of him that she never came out again, and so she died in there—the tell-tale.

*Told by TÂTERÂQ.*

### QISUK, WHO WENT AWAY SOUTH

They relate of Qisuk that he went south with his wife on a sledge from Cape York. On the way they met with some people who were starving. They were waiting until there should be snow on the slippery ice; but Qisuk, who understood seal-catching on slippery ice, taught them, and he himself caught many seals; and soon the others began to catch some too.

Then he left them and journeyed to those who live farthest away; they took with them prepared skins and Little Auks preserved with blubber as payment. They wanted to buy wooden trays for meat.

Then they came to a man who lived quite alone, and he treated them as relatives, and said that he was glad people had come.

And they stayed with him for a time.

From the people about there they bought meat trays and gave them the prepared skins instead.

When they were about to leave, the man said to them :  
“ The people in the south are not good people ! ”

Then they journeyed till they came to the people who used to wait for strange sledges to start away, to attack them ; and there they remained for some time on a visit.

Among these people there were two women who often sang drum-songs. They sang them quite naked, with only a belt round their waists. They lived in two houses built side by side, which had the same entrance, and when they began to sing there, the dust flew up and their long hair floated about their bodies to the music of the drums.

One of these women was very big ; she was so big that she used five fox-skins for trousers. We generally only use two. She was unmarried, but her fellow-singer had a little bit of a husband. They used to pull each other's fingers, for the big one wanted the little one's husband, but the little one was strong.

Qisuk remained with these people for a few days.

The night before he was going away, he slipped out by himself, and cut the heel-lashings of the sledges from the inside, so that no one could see.

The people were very anxious to over-feed his dogs, so that they should run heavily ; but as he was carrying the food-box out, he pretended to stumble, and fell, so that it was the strange dogs who ate the food.

Then he went to the window and said to his wife—

“ Get your cap and make haste out ! ” and she came out, and they started off. And he incited his dogs to a wild gallop, by running alongside them. And then a very great many came driving after them, but the runners under their sledges gave way.

Only one continued the chase, for on his sledge only the one runner had turned over. But he suddenly saw a large dog running in front of his sledge, a dog the one side of which



OUR COMPANIONS ON OUR JOURNEY BACK TO CIVILISATION



was bleached bone. It was Qisuk's amulet. And so all the pursuers were afraid, and turned back.

But Qisuk reached home safely.

*Told by NIVIGKANA.*

\* \* \* \* \*

It was the day on which I was to leave the people I had grown so fond of.

Early in the morning I went up among the fjelds and looked for the last time out over the country, which had now been too long wrapped in the white darkness of the Polar night.

The farewell that was before me was no easy one, but I had my dogs and my sledge: a swish of my whip-lash, and the life I was to be torn from would soon be far behind me.

The sky was tremulous with stars; the wide landscape encircling it awaited the day.

I went down again to the Eskimo houses. My sledge was loaded up, and the dogs were waiting only for me.

Then an old Eskimo woman came towards me; it was "The Sinew," the wife of "The Mannikin": I had stayed in her house often, during the long dark season. She stopped in front of me.

"You look so happy!" she said.

"Yes!"

"Ah! I understand you. You are going home. Are you anxious to get away?"

"Yes,—nay, I think I am only anxious for a change."

The old woman looked me gravely in the face, and said slowly—

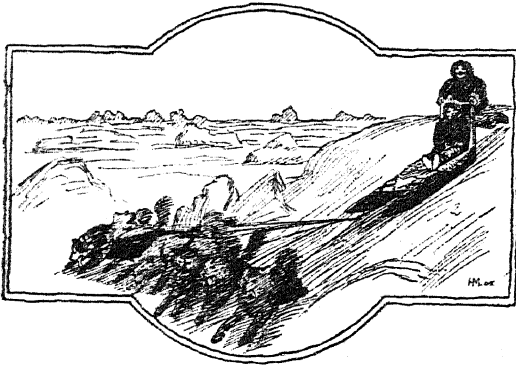
"Listen now, before you leave us, to a word from an old woman who understands only love and—food.

"You are like the sea-king. When the spring warms the

country, it visits us. It comes from a country far, far away, which we do not know.

“You came here like the sea-king, with the welcome spring ; but when the summer was over and the flight began, you stayed. So that is why you are eager now to get back to your country and your people ; and it is good for you to go.

“Do you hear? your dogs are whining. Never wait for the dawn, when you are eager to be gone !”



# THE WEST GREENLANDERS

*Our country has wide borders ; there is no man born has travelled round it.*

*And it bears secrets in its bosom of which no white man dreams.*

*Up here we live two different lives ; in the Summer, under the torch of the Warm Sun ; in the Winter, under the lash of the North Wind.*

*But it is the dark and cold that make us think most.*

*And when the long Darkness spreads itself over the country, many hidden things are revealed, and men's thoughts travel along devious paths.*

BLIND AMBROSIUS,  
*surnamed* "THE DIAPHRAGM."





# THE WEST GREENLANDERS

## LIFE IN A COLONY

AUTUMN is here, and the first snow has fallen. Outside the fresh north wind is blowing, and in the early morning everything is white with hoar-frost. The cold is returning, and the winter drawing the earth, little by little, within its chill embrace. The summer has gone ; it has fled from us, as the light nights of summer flee from the young.

But men have an uncontrollable impulse to dwell upon that which is past and can never return. And now, as, clad in my robe made of bird-skins, I sit and feel the cold working up to me through the floor, my thoughts turn to those days when the sun shone warmest and—the gnats were most unmerciful.

It was on one of our first expeditions after arriving in this country. Count Moltke and I waved farewell to our comrades one warm summer day at the end of June, and set out over the fjord towards the colony and fishing village of Kangeq. The place was not more than a few miles from Godthaab, but the ice which lay closely packed over the whole fjord made the passage to the other side a matter of almost a day's journey. Slowly we punted our way across, our kayak-men picking the way for us. I had taken one of the oars, and let the Greenlander I had relieved sit down in the bottom of the boat and tell us tales, legends, his own adventures, anything that came into his head.

In this way we idled the day away. Meanwhile we were coming to more and more ice. Occasionally the boat stuck fast, jammed between large floes, and then we had to jump out on the ice and break it up with boat-hooks.

A south-west wind had sprung up and the floes were increasing in number. A kayak which we met, coming from

Kangeq, further announced to us that the sea round about the colony was impassable for boats. So a council was held, and it was decided that the first thing to be done was to try and reach some spot from which we could observe. From it we saw a lead, wide enough for us to slip through; and so we poled our way on.

By eight o'clock at night we had pitched camp, and the same evening we paid a visit to the official of the place, the "Udligger," as the principal inhabitant, generally a trader, is called in these out-of-the-way places. He was of mixed Danish and Greenlandic race, almost Danish in appearance, but wholly Greenlandic in manners. The house was furnished in Eskimo fashion. An abundant meal of cod was placed before us, and we were finally served, with great ceremony, with a real Danish "*snaps*,"<sup>1</sup> which is a rare treat up here. We did not need to be invited twice to partake, and when, towards midnight, we took our leave of our new friends, the stage of banal formalities had long been left behind.

Quite early next morning we were informed that Jørgen Brönlund, the young catechist of the place—the man who later joined our expedition party—was going to hold morning service at Baletikka's at eight o'clock. After a hasty toilet in the brook which ran past our tent, we went up to the house. It was a fairly large earthen hut of the ordinary Greenlandic type, with flat roof, and long, low and narrow entrance passage, all built of earth and stone. When we had crept through the passage, we found the house already filled with worshippers. Inside, on the roomy sleeping-place to the side, sat or lounged groups of people. The heat was suffocating.

All about the walls hung decorated egg-shells, as ornaments, and in the midst of them all stood out, in quite striking relief, a large oleograph of Fridtjof Nansen. This was the pride of the family.

Service commenced. The catechist said the Lord's Prayer and sang to us. The hymn-singing was part-singing. The

<sup>1</sup> A liqueur of spirits, usually a gin of Danish manufacture, called Akvavit, and manufactured at Aalborg.





choir began quite softly, with only a few voices ; but the voices increased in numbers and volume. The men growled out their deep and melodious bass, and the high clear voices of the women blended agreeably with it.

After the sermon there was a christening. The font was an old chest of drawers ; the basin, a coffee slop-basin : primitive but practical—for those who have nothing else ; and impressive, by reason of the reverence which the catechist and the congregation infused into the ceremony.

Towards midday the "Expedition" gave a large concert in the house of the "Udligger." The programme courted every taste, and the "performance was received with ovations." Wagner's "Pilgrims' Chorus" had to be repeated several times "da capo," and the most enthusiastic of the listeners expressed a wish to have it incorporated among the Christmas hymns of the Greenlandic church. But the lighter music was not less well received, and many of the melodies probably still survive on the local harmonica there, as a "gift" from the Expedition. For every one who teaches a new, or hitherto unknown melody, is regarded as a "giver" up there. Tunes—as well as stories for that matter—have their lords and owners. Thus, a Greenlander related to me one day with great pride that he had taken a tune as his godfather's gift to a christening. He had "made" it himself, and had played it for the first time at the opening of the christening dance. The tune was exceedingly well received and promptly learnt by all present. And before long the composer had the satisfaction of knowing that the kayak-men were carrying it from place to place, so that even outlying colonies were annexing it as a popular dancing air.

But to return to our concert ! For it really was a performance which we were justified in expecting to impress our audience. Long orchestral overtures, for instance, had never before been heard at Kangeq. And then the enigmatic and miraculous manner in which it was all produced ! "A fast little machine and an ordinary little funnel which could sing, whistle, laugh, weep, play orchestral selections, and speak every possible language in the world, even Greenlandic !" That was

the description I overheard a Greenlander give of our phonograph.

At first it was the speeches, especially the Greenlandic ones, that seemed to them most nearly connected with "the black art." No one quite liked to stand very near to the funnel.

"Take care that he does not spit on you," I heard one say; and another, of a more comfortable frame of mind, proposed at the end that, as some slight recognition for the exertion, they should give "the man inside" a little tobacco to chew.

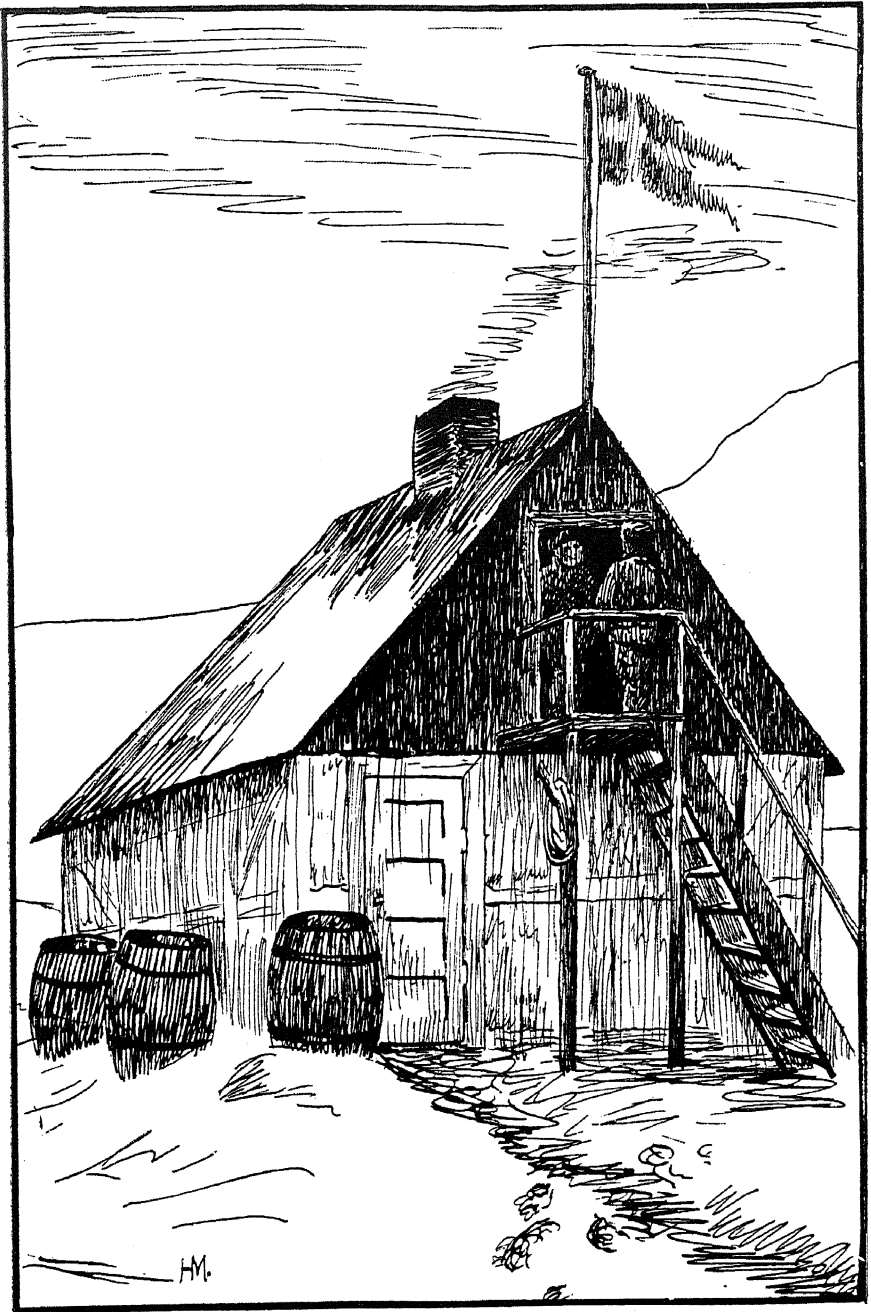
During the performance some explanation of the phenomenon was of course given—which rendered their astonishment even greater. Orchestral selections that had been played in New York or in Copenhagen long ago they were now sitting listening to in a Greenlandic hut at Kangeq! And the notes—"the music-holders" as they called them—were no bigger than fly-marks! We showed them the portrait of Edison; it was gazed at with great reverence.

"Such a work of art, I suppose, could not be done any better in Heaven," one of them remarked.

"If the chatterer belonged to me," said another, "I should make it play for me day and night, forget everything else, and at last die of hunger!"

Very soon after midday, preparations were commenced for the christening dance, which was to be held in the open. The "Udligger," whose beautiful daughters were greatly interested in the festival, lent rough boards; a magnificent dancing-floor was soon knocked together, and placed upon a large, flat rock. The dancers would not, in sooth, feel much firm ground beneath their feet, for the floor was as much alive as they were, and gave to every movement of their feet; moreover it creaked and cracked under one like thin ice. But that only added to the fun.

It was three o'clock in the afternoon when the first notes of music summoned the Kangeq people to the dance. The music, a harmonica and a three-stringed violin, played to a tightly packed throng of listeners assembled close to the dancing rock. The young girls came laughing and shouting out of the houses



THE SHOP AT TASIUSSAQ, THE MOST NORTHERLY SPOT IN GREENLAND  
INHABITED BY A EUROPEAN





and ran down to the dancing; the men came after them, almost as though unwilling, with hands thrust deep in their trousers pockets.

All the ball guests had been collected at once, and the musicians rattled off their gay dancing tunes. But it was a long time before the dance began. Greenlandic coquetry must first have its fling. Since the day before every one had been looking forward to the dance, and no one had talked of anything else all day; but now that the great moment had arrived there must be coquettish dallying. No one would be the first to dance. The girls hid themselves behind each other; the men looked indifferent.

"I never said I wanted to dance."

"Ah! who wants to swing round such a ball of fat in this heat?"

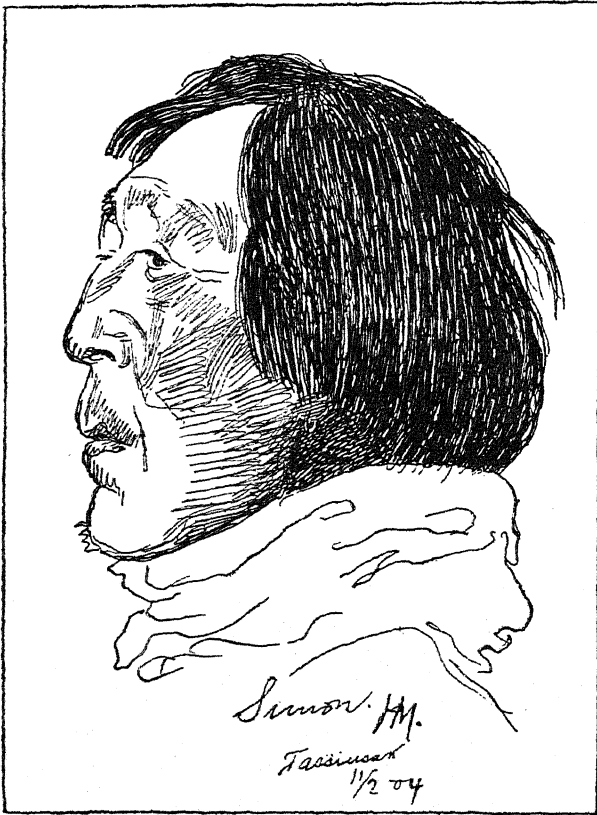
This is how they talked, and yet every heart was beating eagerly, anxious to begin. But traditional custom prescribes that very nearly an hour shall be "wasted"; and, in the meantime, the musicians sat patiently, grinding out their melodies to the empty air.

It was a lovely afternoon. The sea shone like molten lead (Greenlandic simile), the sun scorched pitilessly down, and the ice, which lay packing close in to the land, glistened brightly. The water round the floes glittered pale green in amongst the dark blue holes and hollows that the sea had eaten away.

Our industrious artist had been out to make a sketch, and I, who am always the frivolous member of the party, had dragged him back from his work to the dance. We had stopped on a cliff and looked down on the dancing and out over the sea. Neither spoke; we only looked at each other and shook our heads.

The artist's face was shining with enthusiasm and working ardour, and I had some suspicion of what was going on in his mind. But before he had time to think, I had seized him vigorously by the shoulder and flown with him from the spot which would otherwise have tempted him to be false to the promise he had given the pretty daughter of the "Udligger."

We each "drew" a girl, and swung out on the swaying dancing-floor. And the dancing mood was awakened in a trice. They jumped about, tramped round, and wore their shoes through in the "reels." The women tittered and laughed and the men shouted, to put spirit into the dancing.



Round dances are for a rest, and demand no special exertion ; but the stamping and sprawling in a reel are work worthy of a man, think the Greenlanders. And they danced all afternoon and evening till midnight. Then they stopped, for by then the harmonica man's first finger had become absolutely numb.

Early next day we went on an egg-collecting cruise to the Cook Islands, islets to the number of a few hundred which





lie some miles' distance from Kangeq. The crews consisted of five girls, a steersman and a kayak-man; in addition to these we took with us, for the entertainment of the company, the best story-teller and comedian of the place—Jua.

The umiaq set our course towards the ice, the kayak-man found the leads, and without great difficulty we reached the islets.

A umiaq is not a specially trustworthy craft when the field-ice is packed, for its simple build will not stand close contact with the ice. It consists only of a thin wooden framework covered with skin and strained so tightly that you can see the water through it. When the waves run high the boat twists and gives to the pressure of the sea, but will stand a great deal, as nothing is nailed fast, only lashed together in such wise that it can bend without breaking. As a rule, on long umiaq journeys, people take with them a lump of blubber which can be used as a temporary plug, should a hole make its appearance.

We rowed from isle to isle and collected sea-swallows' eggs for our midday meal. The sea-swallows flew, terrified, over our heads and protested loudly. The air quivered with their shrieks.

When we had enough for a good, big dinner, we rowed across to a more luxuriant island where there were both twigs and water in plenty. And while the eggs were boiling and the coffee warming, Jua told us tales.

He gesticulated and contorted his indiarubber face in the most whimsical grimaces, shouted and laughed till the oarswomen rolled about in their mirth and enjoyment.

All afternoon we rowed in and out amongst the islands. Eider-ducks whistled about the boat, sea-swallows screamed and threatened us from above, and black guillemots dived and played hide and seek with us, whenever we came near them.

Towards evening we encamped on Angisoq Isle. I had followed the umiaq in a kayak, and a little leak in the bottom had drenched my nether garments. As it was imperative to get them dried before night, the Greenlanders came to my

rescue in a manner as practical as it was effective. Large fires were lighted, and when they had burnt up well, a few flat stones were laid over the fire and my clothes placed upon them. They were dry at once. Still, I should hesitate to recommend the method.

The day's catch—eider-ducks, black guillemots and gulls—were then prepared in genuine Greenlandic fashion: "Cooked on stones, *à la mousse*." The birds were wrapped in the moss, which was fresh-gathered and dripping with wet, and then boiled, or more accurately, roasted, on flat stones, without getting burnt, the smoke, which rose from them all the time, giving them a smoky taste which was most agreeable.

We had only brought one little tent with us, and in this all thirteen of us slept, men and women, together. Fresh seaweed took the place of bed-clothes.

Early next morning I went inland to inspect some old pagan graves. While it was still half dark, the painter had gone up the hills to paint. The graves were very interesting, and the examination of one only of them brought me in as result nine skulls and some bones, which, to the great horror of the Greenlanders, we carried down to the tents.

The Eskimos of old time devoted great labour to the making of their graves. Huge blocks of granite had been collected and piled up in cairns on the top of a little height, just facing the sea. Their surroundings imparted a desolate and lugubrious appearance to them, and it was a unique and peculiarly sinister and deserted atmosphere which seemed in the twilight to brood over these great, cold blocks of granite, covering the mouldering remains.

Meanwhile a wind was rising, a fresh sou'-wester, which packed the ice in towards the land. And our steersman, Sebat, who had been up to look out, announced that we must get back to Kangeq before evening, if the return were not cut off for us already.

But an Eskimo ruin, close to our camp, had first to be investigated. The story-teller, who knew all about it, gave out that it was the house of a legendary hero, Kagnagssuaq.



DORTHE, SÖREN NIELSEN'S GREENLANDIC WIFE





The plan of it as measured and drawn up, showed it to be certainly one of the largest Eskimo ruins that have hitherto been found. The one room of which the whole house consisted was lived in by from seventy to eighty people, and the plan gives a splendid impression of how everything was arranged in olden times. By the side of the house there were provision larders, some of them built up against the walls of the house itself, others on the slope of the adjacent cliff, about twenty altogether. And in a luxuriant little valley, to the south of the site, there were six or seven camping-places which had been used in the summer while the houses were being aired.

But, while time was passing in these interesting investigations, more and more ice was drifting in from Davis Strait. And when we put the umiaq into the water at last, we had to pass through narrow defiles so closely packed with ice that we had to cut our way through.

Angisoq Island, where we had spent the night, was one of the outermost islands in the large group, so that it was evening before we reached the Sound which led across to Kangeq. There was a slight sea on, and the umiaq writhed and twisted, but we managed to keep up good speed, for their longing to be home again lent strength to the arms of our oarswomen.

We were just talking about a little festival that the Udligger had promised us on our return when the "stroke" of the boat, Abraham's wife, Elina, sprang to her feet and pointed ahead.

"A buoy!" she called out.

And, a long way out, we saw something come dancing towards us, now and again disappearing in the waves. There was silence in the boat and all the laughing ceased. A buoy without an owner always presages death up there. The kayakman paddled after it and brought it back with him. All recognised it, and the silence in the boat fell deeper still; the buoy was the property of Samuel, Elina's son, and the thong of it was broken.

No one spoke, not even Elina. But the women bent to their oars as if they meant it.

As soon as we neared the land, Elina rose in the boat and called out to ask whether Samuel had returned.

Samuel had not returned. She uttered a hoarse cry, which seemed doubly uncanny and harsh by contrast with the long silence, fell, and was carried into her house.

A few old women hurried forward, uttering wild cries, and ran, moaning, down to Elina's to mourn with her. Their screams re-echoed from the rocks and filled the little colony with dreariness.

Samuel's elder brother, Andrew, ran restlessly in and out among the houses like a man demented. He clambered up the rocks, looked out to sea, and gave vent to long, monotonous howls. Then he ran down to the houses again, lifted his little four-year-old brother in his arms, kissed him and fondled him, pressed him convulsively to him, and shouted into his ears that Samuel had gone away and would never come back again. The little one, who did not in the least understand what it all meant, was frightened at his brother, and burst into tears.

A murmur rose among the people standing on the beach—

“Abraham, Abraham! there comes his father!”

Abraham was rowing round the point, unsuspecting of disaster. But he soon caught sight of Andrew, running to meet him, and seemed to grasp what had happened. He gave a great groan, like a man stunned by a blow, and lurched heavily forward in the kayak. It all but capsized with his unconscious body in it, but he was dragged ashore by the others and carried up to his house.

For several days none of the family showed their faces amongst the rest, and neither father nor son went out fishing.

Only when the instinct of self-preservation roused them from their sorrow, will they have gone once more in search of food, out on the sea which gives and takes so much.



KAREN NIELSEN



## IN A WALRUS-HUNTER'S CAMP

IN the northern part of the Holstensborg and the southern part of the Egedesminde districts, the North Greenlanders hold great walrus-hunts in September. At this time of year the walruses make their way in from the open sea towards the land and assemble on the islets by the hundred. The neighbourhood of North Strömfjord is their rendezvous in chief. Here they collect at times in such large numbers that umiaqs, which happen to be up the fjord, hunting reindeer, are cut off from returning for weeks together.

The pack sometimes covers whole islands out in the fjords, and the long, sharp tusks of the animals can make it exceedingly dangerous for a umiaq to approach. In a kayak, on the other hand, the adept walrus-hunter is rarely afraid, provided the numbers of the enemy are not too great. If you meet a flock of them on land—and walruses can climb to the top of a considerable cliff—you cut off their return at ebb-tide and prepare for a wholesale slaughter of the animals, who can only move about the rocks very slowly. In the course of an hour it is possible to kill as many as fifty, when circumstances are favourable. And the lucky Greenlanders are then amply rewarded for their trouble.

It is autumn now, and the walrus migration is just proceeding, *via* Taseralik, towards North Strömfjord. I am the guest of David, the big-game fisherman, one of the most daring of walrus-killers. The camp counts, in all, eight tents, all inhabited by Greenlanders from the southern district of Egedesminde. The hunt has not yet commenced; we are waiting for the walruses to go ashore.

IGDLUERUNGNEQ, *September 17, 1902.*

Nothing is a greater strain upon a traveller than too much hospitality, and invitations have rained upon me to-day; but

the northern Greenlandic hospitality is renowned; even the south Greenlanders, who are loath to be behindhand in anything, talk of it. If a stranger arrives at a camp or village he must see and be seen—the very first day. And no housewife thinks it seemly to allow a guest to cross her threshold without feeding him. The good things offered to one in the various tents cannot, for the best of reasons, be very varied: meat first—seal-beef, or, as here, walrus-flesh—and then coffee. There is one comfort, though, when you have to go to a number of places, viz., you need not remain longer with your hosts than is necessary for just eating and drinking. That accomplished, you have done your duty and may go. But to eat, for example, eight huge meals of meat with coffee to follow, one after another, is—a thing to which you only grow used after living for some time among the Greenlanders.

After I had, in the course of two or three hours, taken my eight meals, there was a call to football, with the expressed object of “settling the food.”

Football is played with great energy by men, women, and children. Several mothers joined in the game, with their children in carrying-bags. It was exceedingly comical to see them springing about, with the little ones, screaming, on their backs. If one of the tinies happened to kick at the ball, a chorus of laughter would break out from the old dames watching.

“Perûk! perûk!” (“Imitate him! imitate him!”)

And then you would see old, rheumatic grandmothers fling themselves into the mêlée and jump about after the ball, gasping for breath, simply to “peruvokke” some pet or other.

The game of football lasted for a long time, and was played with great ardour. I was particularly surprised at the endurance of the women. The game only ended as darkness fell.

When, late in the evening, I crawled into David's tent to lie down and sleep, it was not without silent anxiety at the demands that good-natured people can make on one's digestive organs.



JOSEPHINE NIELSEN





*September 9.*

A south-west wind has been blowing hard all night and every one has been astir. We were awakened as the tent was on the verge of blowing over. There was no time to dress, only a moment in which to snatch a pair of kamiks. Half-naked men and women ran about shouting and calling to one another.

"Help! help! the tent is blowing over!" yelled one.

"Come here at once!" cried another.

"The umiak is being blown into the water!"

And some could be seen embracing the tent poles, others dragging up the umiaqs. Men gave orders, women shrieked and children cried. One caught sight in the twilight of a scene of wildest confusion: tents being moved, umiaqs being carried under shelter, bewildered men and women tumbling over one another.

But the storm took little heed of the trouble it was causing, and it kept on sweeping the waves into the little harbour till the beach was white with foam and froth.

Till morning, there was no finding one's way among the various tents. All had been moved, and the camp was quite altered in appearance.

It is not a fishing day; all are staying at home.

David's mother-in-law is pouring out coffee all round. We drink it, lying face downwards on the ground, and while we drink and smoke, we chat and discuss anything that comes uppermost. There is no need to make haste to be up to-day; our sleep during the night has been very fragmentary.

"I am an old man now, with grown-up children," says David, "but I have not yet succeeded in being master in my own house. My mother-in-law rules us all. She gets all that I fish, catch, or hunt, and it is her business to spend the money; but she is a sensible woman, and we are all well served under her rule."

The mother-in-law laughs; all laugh; the early morning temper that prevails is radiant.

A gust of wind lifts the flap of the tent and shows us the frothing sea just outside. The air is full of snow and it is cold.

"We grow old," said David, pointing to the sea. "In my young days that was the sort of weather that I loved to play in; now I lie in my rugs and gulp down coffee like an old man."

"Tell us about your kayak adventures, David!"

"I will tell you about kayak adventures gladly enough, but it must be my comrade Ové's kayak adventures, not my own; I know all about them; we were always together, from our earliest youth."

"Did you always go together, Ové and you?"

"Yes; we never stirred from each other's side as long as he lived; he was my hunting companion, you see."

"Then they will be your own kayak adventures too, that you will be telling us!"

"You are right!" said David, with a smile; "but if you had seen him with me, when there was a heavy sea on, and had some idea of his gigantic strength, then you would understand that I prefer to talk of him, rather than myself. Ah, I remember one time well! The wind rose while we were far out at sea, a regular biting sou'-wester! The waves ran up as high as cliffs all round us! Each of us had a walrus in tow. A hunting-thong, you know, is three fathoms long, and we were towing them at the full length of the thongs. When the strap, suddenly pulled taut, flung us back the whole length of the line, over the tops of the waves, to the hunting-buoy that the walrus was fastened to; when the waves met over us, till one had hard work to get one's breath at all—you should just have seen Ové then!"

"Once he was swallowed up by a wave which rolled him over and swept him away bodily. It was a long time before we saw anything more of him. We were almost believing that it had choked him, when it spat him out again, and he blew the water out of his nose with a smile; then I forgot myself, and the walrus I was towing, and screamed with delight, until a wave took me with it and stopped my mouth."



HANS PETER, SÖREN NIELSEN'S YOUNGEST SON



Old Edue, the mother-in-law, placed a dish of walrus-beef before us.

"It is nice to have a little ballast inside before getting up," she said.

And we stretched out our hands to the dish and began to eat.

"This is our bread, you see," said David, "and the chasing of these animals is our greatest delight. I always say to the women folk here: 'When the season arrives for us to kill the walruses with the harpoon only, far out at sea—rifles are no good when there is a sea on—then I forget to smoke and drink coffee. So great a simpleton am I still.'"

"You are very fond of the sea, David!"

"Yes, that I am, because I am a son of the sea, and have the habits of the sea;—am never quiet for long together. I am always roaming about; in a umiaq, when there is free passage-way; in dog-sledge, when the sea is frozen over.

"In April, as soon as the ice breaks up, we leave our quarters here and only come back in November. Our first excursion is generally after seal—occasionally walrus as well—at the mouth of the Ström Fjord. In June we go capelin-catching in the neighbourhood of Iginiarfik. Then comes the halibut-fishing at Taseralik, and then, in the month of September, after having brought home the provisions we have collected, back to Taseralik after walrus.

"All that we collect in this way—dried meat, dried capelin and halibut—we live on in the winter, when it is difficult to catch large game. The hunting in the winter is net-work and seal-hunting at the holes made by the current. As a rule we can use our kayaks here until December.

"From the month of March till the breaking up of the ice, we catch seals when they crawl up on the ice to sun themselves. And—well, that makes the whole year round."

"Tell us something about your hunting companion!"

"Yes; well, he was somewhat older than I, bigger and stronger. The only thing that kept us at home from the seal-hunting was the south-west gale. And then we amused our-

selves by letting the seas inshore toss our kayaks about. At that time neither of us knew the meaning of danger. We stuck the oars into our kayak straps, folded our arms across our chests, and let the waves bury us beneath them. The old people never checked us. No one was afraid of anything happening to us, for we two were intended to live, people said, and you see they were right. Ové only died at an advanced age. And as for me, I am alive still, in spite of everything.

"Oh, you shall hear more about Ové; you will be interested, I know. One summer we were sailing in umiaq. Ové and I were following in our kayaks, and then——"

"Invitation to coffee, from Ejalik's to Kunut!" called a voice from outside.

"Ah! then I will just keep this story," broke off David.

"Very well; adieu for the present"—and then into my clothes, and out to the duties of the day.

*September 21.*

There is great excitement in the camp at present on account of a trail that Lûtivik has seen in the neighbourhood of Kingigtoq Fjeld. The tracks were twice the width of a foot, but oblong; thus they could not be a bear's; and for reindeer—too large. After following up the tracks for a time, a half-eaten hare was found, quite fresh; it could not have been more than a few hours since it was left. Consequently the animal must be somewhere in the neighbourhood, and as, moreover, Kingigtoq was supposed to be the haunt of mysterious monsters, Lûtivik had decided to leave the trail and make his way home, for fear that it should be a "Qapiarfik" or "Kilivfak," as it is also called.

This is a ferocious animal, so large that it can run with a whole reindeer in its mouth. If you shoot one of these animals, you can live in plenty on it for a long time. You can eat its flesh three times, if you are careful not to injure the bones; for so many times it will grow again.

During the night there had been a light fall of snow on Kingigtoq. Splendid for following up a trail! And together



WALRUSES ON A REEF, TASERALIK  
(*From an Oil-Painting*)





with a few of the young fellows, I determined to try my luck the next day.

We were to row across a bay in our kayaks, carry the kayaks a little distance up to a lake—twenty-four to thirty miles long—and then row right up to the foot of Kingigtoq. Great things were expected of our hunt. We ourselves were much elated.

In the evening the men collected in Malanga's tent, and one hunting story followed another. We sat round on the tent floor. The women sat near the lamp and sewed. Outside, it was moonlight and calm. The ripple of the waves came up only faintly from the strand.

Malanga was narrator.

He was a little man of about fifty—nimble in his movements and the possessor of a well-oiled tongue.

"Some of the young ones think of going to Kingigtoq in the morning. It is a wonderful hill. Lûtivik, I hear, saw some remarkable tracks there yesterday. He is not the first. Do you know the story of the 'One-eyed Giant of Kingigtoq'?"

"I will tell it you.

"The story goes that there was once a great famine in the houses at Igdluerungneq. At last the people were so wasted with hunger that they no longer rose from their sleeping-places. Yes, though, there was one who hunted for them all, and he was a little orphan boy. When he caught a ptarmigan, he shared it with the others. When he caught two, they were as delighted if he had brought home two seals. It was not much divided, but at any rate each got a taste of something on his parched tongue.

"One day he went out hunting as usual. He walked all day, and did not see a living thing. Day was declining when he reached Kingigtoq, and he had almost reached the top without having found a ptarmigan. It was beginning to grow dark, but he dared not go home empty-handed.

"As he was spying about the hill, to his surprise he caught sight of a house. And he knew that there had not been a house on that spot before. He went up to it, but saw no one about, and at last he stole in through the passage.

"Inside the house sat a giant. He was like a man, but had only one eye. The giant's astonishment at the meeting was no less than the boy's.

"Should you like any food, perhaps?' asked the giant kindly. 'Sit down.'

"Then he went out and brought back a quantity of dried meat.

"Now eat as much as ever you can,' he said, putting the meat before him. The boy ate, and his hunger gave place to satisfaction without the food being perceptibly less. There was so much.

"Now you shall sleep here to-night. To-morrow when you have had a good rest, you shall go home. You can sleep without fear of harm.'

"Then they spent the evening and the night together. When at last he was ready to start home, the giant gave him as much reindeer-meat as he could carry.

"When you get home, and your fellow-countrymen begin to eat, you must tell them that however badly they may want to eat a little blubber with the meat they must not do so on any condition. Not even as much as one solitary morsel. If they do, you will never find me again, no matter how you may seek me. If, however, you follow my advice, then you will be able to find me whenever you need my help.'

"Then the boy went, and there was great joy at Igdluerungneq when he returned. And all did what the giant had said. Once or twice, it is true, some old crones mentioned blubber.

"E—E—Ee—if we might only have a bit of blubber with it—E—just one little morsel!' But the others cried shame on them, when they heard it, and forbade them.

"A few days later the boy went up to the giant again. He found the house, walked in, and was even better received than before. Under the sleeping-place he saw a giant rib-bone, quite white, with the most delicious-looking fat on it.

"I have caught a huge Qapiarfik,' said the giant, pointing to the rib.



GREENLANDIC WOMAN FROM KANGEQ, NEAR GODTHAAB



"The boy did not understand what it was.

"'I have caught a huge Qapiarfik,' he repeated, and then the boy understood.

"The giant then began to cut off some of the meat, and cooked the boy a very good supper.

"'It is so difficult to get any distraction up here. Stay here to-night,' said the giant.

"And the boy did so.

"Late in the evening the giant began to dress himself for Angákoq games.

"'There is a great Angákoq festival to-night at Erqûtit, and I have to be there ; come with me,' said the giant.

"It was about eighty miles to Erqûtit, and the idea did not appeal to the boy.

"'We shall be there before dawn,' said the giant, to satisfy him, when he saw his hesitation. Then the boy agreed.

"So they got ready. The one-eyed giant put on his finest clothes, and then explained to the boy what he was to do.

"'You must cling fast to my neck and shut your eyes. If you open them, you will get so giddy that your stomach will turn over inside you, and you will fall.'

"So they went to the edge of a precipice—it is supposed to have been the highest peak of Kingigtoq—and there the boy received orders to hold fast to the giant's neck.

"Then the one-eyed one began to swing his arms about, and to make circular motions like a bird, about to rise on the wing. Then off they went. The boy shut his eyes. A tremendous, whistling roar, as if he were in the midst of a storm, was all that he was conscious of.

"'Now we are at Erqûtit,' said the giant. The boy hardly seemed to have had time to draw his breath, they had come so quickly. He opened his eyes a very little way, and saw some tiny little black dots, far, far below them: those were the houses. The giant then began to descend, going round and round in a circle.

"'The Angákoq festival is to be held in that house there,' he said, pointing to a large, brilliantly lighted house. Then

he spread out his arms and began to sail through the air, without flapping, just as large birds do when they are about to alight. By this time they were at the entrance to the house. When they got inside the house, all was ready for the spirit festival. The whole night passed. The most distinguished Angákoqs sang and prophesied, one relieving another all the time.

“Only towards daybreak did they fly back to Kingigtoq.

“‘Now sleep first,’ said the giant; ‘rest with an easy mind, and later in the day you can go home.’

“And the boy thought the words of the giant worth obeying, and stayed. Afterwards, when he went, he received as much Kilivfak-meat as he could carry, but on the same conditions as before. No one was to eat blubber with it, or they should never enjoy the giant’s provisions again.

“He was greeted with delight and much surprise when he got home.

“‘Have you caught a reindeer?’ several of them said, all speaking at once.

“‘No,’ said the boy; ‘the giant of Kingigtoq Peak has caught a Qapiarfik.’

“And then he told them the condition the giant had imposed, and warned them all several times, very earnestly, to be sensible.

“And they all began to eat with great appetite.

“But it happened just as on the previous evening that some old crones began to chatter about how delicious it would be if one might eat just a little bit of blubber with it. But the others, when they heard it, grew angry and cried shame upon them, and scolded them.

“All at once there was a tremendous thump from outside. The house shook, and the window frames fell on the floor. One of the old crones had put a bit of blubber in her mouth, behind the backs of the others. And the giant, standing outside the window, called in angrily—

“‘You do not deserve my help, you disobedient people, who do not respect my words. No one shall ever find my house again, however he may seek it.’

And they heard a whistling through the air as he flew away, and that was all.

"After that the boy often went to look for the giant's house—but he could not find so much as a turf of the wall on the place where it had been.

"Here ends this story."

Through the flap of the tent we could just see Kingigtoq, rising high and steep, above all the other hills in its neighbourhood.

The eyes of each involuntarily turned to it.

"In my young days the hills up there were the home of the reindeer in the summer. There they had their trodden paths, which led from feeding-place to feeding-place, along the slopes of the cliff. And no one went reindeer-hunting to Kingigtoq in vain."

It was Ajunge, an old woman of sixty, who had spoken. She lay on the sleeping-place, doubled up with rheumatism, and her voice, which did not rise above a whisper, quavered when she grew excited. She had been sitting half asleep with closed eyes, while Malanga was talking. When he finished, she suddenly roused herself. The wrinkles of her forehead went up and down as she moved her blue, bloodless lips, and a dried-up, bony hand wiped away the stream of tears that constantly ran from her excoriated eyes. She coughed, moistened her dry lips with her tongue, and spoke :

"I remember so plainly the time when I was young and carried meat for the reindeer-hunters. It is a long time ago, but I can still make all my old memories wake again. Ah! it is a long time since I ceased to live; all that I have seen is a long way off, so far, far away. But through one's thoughts, things can come back still; it is as if I saw my life through a telescope. That which is far comes near.

"In my youth even women could catch reindeer. We had gone out to pluck berries not far from here, when a great herd of reindeer came towards us. We just lay down where we were, in the heather. They came galloping along, right over



us, and then old Lisbeth seized a little calf by the leg and caught it. Oh, I remember the fun we had dragging it home."

Old Ajunge had talked too eagerly—a fit of coughing choked her words.

The evening was calm, and moonlit. The lights from the tent-lamps shone over the sea and lost themselves in the night like winding tongues of flame in the darkness.

The young ones had collected outside the tents and were singing. Slowly, somewhat draggingly, the blended basses and high sopranos sang the melodies through to the end.

And the notes rang out to the tall, mute hills, which received into themselves the light of the moon, the ripple of the sea, and the song of the gladsome people.



## MANASSEH

“AYLAY-AYLAY-LAY-LAY!” yelled Manasseh, flinging himself on his sledge. His three huge dogs sprang up, and tore off, dragging sledge and man after them across the ice.

“Yes! that is like him,” said the people thronged round my sledge. “If you are going with him, you must teach your dogs a quick measure for their feet!”

It was an early moonlight morning in January, with a windless frost and magnificent going for the sledges. Manasseh and I were bound for the large, loamy plains behind South-East Bay, in the Christianshaab District, in order, if possible, to get through to the hamlet of Aulatsivik, following the inland ice.

My companion was reputed one of the most marvellous dog-drivers in North Greenland;<sup>1</sup> he never drove more than three dogs, but few with a team of ten could venture to race with him. I knew this, so I did not let him get much of a start, but seized my whip and made my eager dogs leap out across the ice-foot with me. They picked up the scent, with a series of short, sharp barks, pricked up their ears, mended their pace, and were off, the frozen snow whistling beneath the runners.

Soon the day broke. The sky in the east became alight with delicate frost colourings. Light drifting clouds gathered round the crimson rim of the sun, and moon and stars grew pale, as the day cast its cold gleam over ice and fjeld.

Manasseh pulled up, to disentangle his traces; I stopped my dogs, and went up to him.

“You have good dogs, Manasseh; rumour does not lie, then.”

“Rumour always lies! it is only that my dogs are in a grim humour—do you understand? their exertions are like the

<sup>1</sup> North Greenland, the name of a district, which, however, does not reach as far as what is geographically the north of Greenland.—G. H.

convulsions of a dying animal!" replied Manasseh, with the wilful misrepresentation which is so typically Greenlandic; but at the same time he cast a beaming glance at his dogs, whose temper and powers he was such a past master in controlling.

We went on, and soon reached the head of South-East Bay. Across a gently sloping hill region, covered with a luxuriant crop of grass, we came to the great, loamy plains which are notorious at this season for the snow and keen east winds which prevail there. Cutting diagonally across the plains, we arrived at Tasiussarssuaq Fjord, with the inland ice in the background. We drove all day long on old, smooth ice, and only at the approach of darkness went ashore and encamped for the night.

The dogs had been fed, and had stretched themselves out to sleep in the snow outside our tent. Our sleeping-bags were spread out on the snow, and we had crawled inside them and were lying, side by side, face downwards, treating ourselves to dried capelin and blubber. Ship's biscuit does not taste well at all in such cold; the body needs fat.

In front of us burned our lamp: a frying-pan filled with blubber which Manasseh had chewed well, to make it fluid. We had wreathed the pan with wicks; the light was dazzling; the warmth most comforting.

As the evening advanced, the snow round the pan began to melt, the heather underneath came into view, and the scent of the heather and of berries filled the tent. Manasseh sniffed it in through nostrils black with smoke, and blinked his eyes contentedly.

"You promised to tell me about the Qavdlunâtsaits country; now you can begin, while I get the water boiled."

And I told him about the country which inspired him with such great respect.

"Is it true that there are poor people in the white men's land too?" he asked suddenly. "We think they are all rich lords, like those that we see up here in our country."

I told him of the proletariat of the great towns of Europe, and his amazement knew no bounds.



VIGGO, A SLEDGE-DOG



"Are you speaking the truth? Can you really, in the same town, find people dying of hunger and others who have plenty of money laid by?—money, which only exists to make more money?"

"Yes! Manasseh."

"But what are the kings and ministers doing then? They ought to help their people."

"You know us Greenlanders; none of us have much, some a little, some nothing. But we help each other along, and life is not so hard. With you things seem to be different. I am sorry for your poor! their hearts must grow evil and bitter, as you say, when they see so much superfluity of which they never get a share. But to be a rich man in a land like that seems to me an even greater curse."

The water over the lamp was boiling, and we brewed ourselves a cup of strong tea.

There were two things in which Manasseh felt a keen interest: missionaries and robbers. His father had been a missionary in Cumberland, but had been obliged to flee from his flock because the magician of the place was trying to kill him.

The whole evening was spent story-telling; I served him up frightful Italian bandit stories, and Manasseh told me old Greenlandic legends. I fell asleep in the middle of one of his tales.

The moon was gleaming in through the flaps of the tent, and the snow shone with a pale yellow, withered light. It was dawn. Nothing was stirring inside the tent. It was absolutely calm, and the sky was clear: an excellent driving day.

"Manasseh! Manasseh!"

The man had crept right down inside his bag; a profound snore only announced his presence.

"Manasseh! it is morning."

A voice from inside the bag, as though from a man speaking in his sleep—

"You are my master; I accompanied you to obey you: what do you want?"

"Make the tea."

Then the blubber came out and the capelin. And we had a good meal, after our long deep sleep.

With the light we set out again, and penetrated farther south across country, until we were stopped on the coast by open water. We were then about thirty miles from Aulatsivik, and so it was not with particularly happy faces that we turned our dogs round and went back. We thought we would then attempt to advance in a south-westerly direction across Nater-naq Plain as far as the hamlet of Niaqornârssuk, whence we could cross to Aulatsivik by umiaq.

Across the loam plains we met a fresh north wind, and severe cold, which drove the frost in our faces. The going was bad; a hard crust had settled on the snow, and the dogs' feet were suffering. The wind struck cold against our bodies, and it was difficult to keep our faces towards the dogs, for our skin was fast stiffening into ice.

Manasseh turned round to me and called—

"Now we are in a good reindeer district. Have your gun in readiness!"

We nodded comprehendingly to each other and drove on, wholly preoccupied with keeping our faces thawed.

All at once the dogs gave a sudden jerk at the traces, and I was almost thrown off my sledge. They thrust their noses into the snow and started off at a mad gallop. A moment later we saw fresh reindeer tracks.

There was nothing to be done but to keep a tight grip of the sledge, which dashed on, across pools, down over clay declivities, swayed to the sides, leapt and bumped over stones, while the snow was scattered like smoke from beneath the dogs' hind-legs; there was no longer any question of choosing the way,—good or bad, it could only be the trail of the reindeer.

This wild race and the hunting zest it aroused in me made the perspiration pour in beads down my forehead in spite of the cold and wind, and I had to tuck my cap and mittens in under the straps of the sledge.

At last we could see the whole herd; there were thirteen,



FEEDING THE DOGS





two great bulls leading the way. Manasseh, who thought that along such rough and difficult ground we should not be able to chase the reindeer with our dogs, stopped his team and tied up their fore-legs. I tried to do the same, but was not able to stop my team, which counted just twice as many dogs as my companion's.

Manasseh, who came to my assistance, had just seized the cross-trace, when the dogs broke into a run again. Manasseh was thrown off his feet and dragged along like a bundle of clothes, almost invisible in the snow-cloud that rose up around him. It was only on coming to a rise that I managed to hold the dogs in, and get the man disentangled from the traces again.

Then the dogs' fore-legs were bound up, and, with guns cocked, we crept forward over the brow of the rise to get within shooting distance of the herd.

In thought we were already cutting up the largest of the bulls, and were picturing to ourselves, with a smile, the reception we should meet with when we arrived home with the animals. But only disappointment awaited us. The animals had scented us, or perhaps heard our dogs, and we saw no more of them. It was almost dark when our hunt was thus abruptly brought to a close, and, silent and abashed, we returned to our dogs.

"I say, Manasseh! that must have been our own fault. If we had only driven up to the reindeer in our sledges, we should probably have done better, after all. Reindeer, you know, are said never to be afraid of dogs."

"Yes; perhaps you are right," replied Manasseh meditatively. "If you had expressed the wish before, I would have agreed to it; I am with you only to obey you; but now it is undoubtedly too late."

After that we drove on for three hours without exchanging a word. But moonlight is a dangerous light in which to drive in unknown country. You do not see slopes; everything seems on a dead level. We fell, sledges and all, over a declivity, and after that thought it would be wise to pitch our tent.

We fed our dogs and were lying, as we had done the night before, in our bags. The blubber from the frying-pan lighted and warmed us, and the kettle was beginning to sing.

"Now tell tales, like you did yesterday!" proposed Manasseh, his mouth dripping with lamp-blubber.

Now that we were once more enjoying the comforts of our tent, life began to assume a more rosy hue again, and we honestly endeavoured, both of us, to forget the disappointment of the reindeer-hunt.

Once more the conversation turned upon robbers and missionaries; Manasseh's curiosity was insatiable. He was very anxious to become a missionary himself, and a conviction of his vocation had been produced in him by a revelation that he had had. He was ready to leave wife and home at any time to go out to the "heathen."

He narrated his revelation with great pride. On a lonely path he had met two old men with long white beards. They led him into a little house, and showed him, through the windows, a large multitude of people gathered together on a wide plain. And the older of the two, a very old man, whose beard was as long as the white locks which hung down his back, spoke to him:

"Dost thou see those people out there? There are good and bad amongst them, all mixed up together; thou shalt lead them on their way through life here."

And then the old man gave him a large book, the Bible, with the words—

"From that, thou, and afterwards others, shalt learn."

And the old man disappeared.

Then Manasseh made his way down to the people that had been pointed out to him; but the way down to them was long and arduous. Then he led his flock forward, through many trials. After long wandering they came to a long and narrow pass, through which all had to go, but only a very few of them made their way through. On the other side the old man met him, and, with joy in his face, lifted his arms high above his head, saying—

“Manasseh, thou hast accomplished a great work!”

Manasseh had grown very solemn, and we drank our tea in silence.

It was not for some time that my companion got his tongue going again, and then he told me a tale about cannibals that was enough to make my hair stand on end.

When, late at night, I slipped down into my sleeping-bag, my brain had hard work to unravel all the impressions of the day—our camp for the night on Naternaq Plain, where as a rule no one ever comes in the heart of winter, the reindeer-hunt, our wild race, stories of robbers and missionaries, revelations and prophets, legends of cannibals—and I fell asleep firmly convinced that there is no country in the world where a traveller meets with such a luxuriant variety of experiences as in Greenland.

## THE GREAT REVIVAL IN EVIGHEDSFJORDEN

THE events of this absolutely veracious story took place in the year 1790 in the Evighedsfjord, in South Greenland, and may be recorded as follows :—

There was once upon a time a man named Habakkuk. He had two children, a son and a daughter. One day, as the boy was playing with the other children in the place, he let fly an arrow which pierced his little sister's nostril, and penetrated her temple. The girl fell down. Her brother ran up to her and immediately tried to pull the arrow out ; but the point had large hooks to it, and as these held fast, he was obliged to put his knee on his sister's head and wrench it out by main force. A thick stream of blood flew up in his face, and simultaneously his sister breathed her last.

This was the great sorrow that came upon Habakkuk and his wife, Mary Magdalene ; and it was this occurrence which gave rise to what I am about to relate.

It all happened a long time ago, when people's sorrows were more violent than they are now. Consequently it was not strange that things began to go wrong with Habakkuk and his wife after this event. They had many visions and many remarkable dreams, and all of them were sent from heaven, they said. And, as their minds had grown sick, they were no longer able to discriminate between truth and falsehood. But what they said spread among the people, and their words had great power over all.

After they had thus acquired considerable authority over their fellow-villagers, they decided that all earthly possessions ought to be in common ; all game and every man's catch must



CATECHIST HEILMANN, TASIUSSAQ



be brought to Habakkuk, who would divide it amongst those who had need of it.

And large, watertight skins were spread over Habakkuk's floor, and it became customary for the day's catch to be piled up on these.

As all the inhabitants of the place followed after Habakkuk, even the catechist fell away from his Christianity and joined the rest.

The catechist was the descendant of a Dane who had lived at the "Old Sukkertoppe," and his name was Bertel Larsen. The catechist himself was named Joseph; and before long he had to do nothing but write down Habakkuk and Mary Magdalene's prophecies. At last all the paper in the village had been used up, and he was obliged to take the leather hangings from the walls and write on them.

All the hunters became so absorbed in what was happening at Habakkuk's, that they left off going out hunting and lived on their winter provisions. There was only one man left who did not join the prophet: this was Shem.

One day that there was a meeting, as usual, and the prophet was speaking of his revelations, he went into the house to listen. He said that when he got inside a strange smell of worms greeted him.

"What is the nasty smell about you all?" he exclaimed, went out again, and never went back.

But my grandmother has told me strange things of what went on at Habakkuk's. When one or other of the disciples, without any reason whatever, wanted to weep, the whole gathering would break out into a terrible crying. And when suddenly some person in the assembly threw himself down on his face and began to laugh, all the rest did the same. And sometimes they would laugh till one would think they could never be serious again.

When Habakkuk was holding his discourses on eternal life, the assembly would sometimes be seized with such a longing for eternal life, that they would begin to jump up and down where they sat.



Then suddenly Habakkuk would stop his oration, mention a name, and say that such and such a one had now entered on the right way; and immediately all the men would rush out of the house, seize their guns, and fire a salute, that they might hear in heaven how men rejoiced at so great salvation.

Sometimes they would go up to the churchyard, too, take each other by the hand, form circles round the graves, and sing hymns for the dead.

About that time there was living in the village a woman who was no longer young. It is said that she always went about nicely dressed in a white sheepskin dress. That was in the days when sheepskins were traded up here. But one day people began to accuse this woman of practising witchcraft and magic; and the feeling against her grew.

At last the men in the village attacked the woman, and they drove her down to the sea, inflicting cruel tortures upon her, and stabbing her with long tent-poles. Down by the sea they tied a stone round her neck and threw her into the water. As she was fat, she did not sink at once, but her legs flew up in the air, her head being held down by the stone, and she struggled horribly for a moment, before she drowned.

There was another woman who was also accused of sorcery; she had a son named Paul. But as the woman knew that one day they would torture and kill her, too, she decided that it was preferable to kill herself. Early one morning she went up to her son, and waking him, said to him—

“Paul, may I jump into the sea?”

“Yes,” replied the son, who was so sleepy that he did not know what was said to him, and the woman ran and threw herself into the sea.

But her son, suddenly grasping what had occurred, dashed after his mother. He was too late to save her. She had thrown herself into the water, under the ice-foot by the fjord.

But Grandmother also told that Mary Magdalene, when people came to show their respect to her by pressing her hand, made a sharp distinction between those to whom she gave her



WIFE OF CATECHIST HEILMANN



whole hand, and those whom she merely touched with her little finger.

While the great revival was proceeding at its wildest and fiercest, Bertel Larsen's second son, Frederik Bertelsen, who at that time was catechist at the "Old Sukkertoppe," came and remonstrated with his brother Joseph, pointing out to him and his fellow-villagers how wrong their behaviour was, but his exhortations were ignored.

The exhortations of a priest having no effect, towards the autumn something happened which brought people to their senses.

For a long time people had noticed that the prophet had manifested a partiality for the proximity of young women, in a way that was not seemly in a prophet.

Well, you see, men and women began to talk of these things among themselves, and it was not long before a falling-away was apparent. One day, a man whose name was Justus towed home a white whale, and Habakkuk as usual came out and called to him to lay it down outside his house. Justus laughed, and replied that for the future Habakkuk would probably have to be content with giving orders about the catch that he brought home himself. This was the signal of the great disruption, and soon Habakkuk and Mary Magdalene were again quite ordinary people of whom no one took any notice.

And a mere chance was the reason why Habakkuk's teaching and many revelations were lost to posterity; for when Frederik Bertelsen's youngest son caught his first seal, all the Bible that Habakkuk and Mary Magdalene had dictated to Joseph was burnt to cook the banquet with.

*Told by "OLD SIDSE" (from Holstenborg).*

## OJUVAINATH, THE HUNTER

“HALLO! the sun is high up in the heavens!”

A tremendous yawn was the only reply.

“Up with you! We must be off!”

One heard the cracking of stiff arms outstretched, and two exceedingly sleepy figures crawled out of a little cave in the rocks.

“Light the fire and make the coffee, Alafitdle!”

“The coffee is ready!”

Ah—qujanaq! That had its effect. Our yawns turned to laughter, and our shivering was forgotten with the swallowing of the welcome hot drink. After a fourteen hours’ journey in kayak, in company of two hunters from Kangâmiut, Carl and Alafitdle, I had taken up my sleeping-quarters on the long, flat promontory that divides South Strömfjord from Kangerdluarssunguaq. It had been an exhausting journey and the passage of the Ström Fjord had tired us. The fjord, one hundred miles in length, empties itself into the sea through a narrow opening with a current like a mill-stream. Although the weather was quite calm when we crossed, the waves had dashed high above our kayaks, and there had been a roaring over the fjord like the noise of an angry sea.

We had gained the opposite side close to the mouth of the fjord. Only a little way off the current boiled up in whirlpools.

“Do you hear it?” said Alafitdle, looking out over the fjord.

“It sounds like a waterfall, far away. We can only go on when the stream is with us, so we shall be obliged to travel night and day, if we want to reach the head, and sleep while we are waiting for the turn of the tide. We can cover the hundred miles in three days, if circumstances are favourable. It is a risky journey in the autumn, when it is beginning to grow dark.



YOUNG GIRL (WEST GREENLAND)



I remember one time that we were rowing by night, when it was so dark that we could hardly see each other in the boat. The water foamed about us and we simply flew along. I was steering. We could not see the land, and could hear nothing but the roaring of the current, and my voice, when I gave an order. The rowers had lost all power of speech and sat silent in the boat. What we had to do was to keep in the middle of the stream at all costs, and it was no easy matter, for we could see neither reef nor turning in the dark;—a white streak, and there would have been a hole in the boat.

“Thus we glided down stream all night, and when it grew light and we could just perceive the outline of the coast, we were flying along beautifully, just in the very middle of the water! Happiest of all was the steerer, and pretty pleased he felt with himself, too.”

Only a short stretch of the fjord was visible from our camp; high, jagged peaks, covered with snow, barred the view. The fjord looked almost like a great mountain stream, picking its way among the rocks.

One felt intensely eager to get behind these rocks, which hid the luxuriant country of the reindeer-hunters from us; but our route lay straight ahead, and then north. Our winter quarters were more than four hundred miles farther north, and we had to reach them before the autumn gales became too fierce. We took our kayaks on our heads and carried them down to the tiny lake which cut the little promontory in two, crossed it, carried them a little farther, and found ourselves at last down by the fjord which was the real goal of our journey. At the head of it, a good four miles up, was the tent of Ojuvainath, the great hunter. He it was whom we had come to visit.

The fjord lay calm and still; our kayaks shot noiselessly through the water. The sun was already high over the hill-tops, and Kingatsiaq's red moraines cast a flickering sheen of colour over the lake. A dolphin rose just ahead of us. Carl made after it, but it saw him and dived. We glided slowly up the fjord without speaking. The strokes of our paddles did not even frighten the sea-birds which swam round and round our



kayaks. Young gulls peered curiously at us, and sailed right up to us on outstretched wing; but not an arrow was let fly at them, not a shot fired.

"Oh! never mind for to-day," said my kayak-men, every time they felt a little tempted.

"The sun must have stood just about there, in the heavens, when it killed the old man from Arsuk," said Alafitdle. "Yes, you know the story? When he saw the sun just over his native place, he felt so happy that his heart broke."

We rounded point after point, leisurely, as men do who are enjoying themselves. At last a white column of smoke was observed ahead: it came from the camp.

"They are putting the welcoming-pot on the fire," said my comrades, and put on speed. A very short time afterwards we were running our kayaks far up in the white sand by the side of the brook where Ojuvainath had pitched his summer camp. I was his guest for five days, and during that time heard many tales of the summer life of the Greenlanders.

Ojuvainath was forty years old, but looked like a man of barely thirty. He was of mixed Danish and Greenlandic race, of middle height, and of unusually harmonious build. His features were not strongly marked, but fine; black, curly hair fell down over a high, arched forehead; his eyes were brown and sparkling, his nose pointed and almost straight, and his energetic mouth was half covered by a closely clipped, reddish-blond beard. His walk was elastic, his bearing stately. He was strong, and knew how to use his strength. His thoughts were clear, and he always expressed them in elegant Greenlandic. Courage he had plenty of, and he made no secret of it. He excelled his countrymen in every pursuit connected with kayak-hunting and fishing, and was conscious of the pre-eminence this gave him. He behaved with a dignity which is, as a rule, foreign to the Greenlanders, and one could not but notice that none of his compatriots cared to act counter to his wishes: when he issued an order, it was executed at once.

To the chagrin of many well-to-do girls who had cast admiring eyes upon him, he had married a poor maiden, who of course worshipped him; there was something southern in the abject delight with which she obeyed his slightest sign. They had a little son, and a daughter who was not quite a year old.

The son, the little hunter to be, was their pride; even then, when he was not three years old, his father was making him his first kayak.

Ojuvainath was a happy man: his home, his children, and his wife occupied all his thoughts and all the time during which he was not out hunting.

"I expect you have noticed that I am always gay," he said to me one day; "and it is because of them, the little ones and my wife."

He always mentioned his wife after the children.

"It was not so a few years ago. Then happiness had slipped through my fingers, and it was hard to seize again. You see, my father and my mother, whom I had always lived with, and of whom I was very fond, died one shortly after the other; and just after that, my first wife died without having given me a son. I found myself suddenly alone, and even my hunting companions rarely saw anything of me. Then, all my thoughts were sad, and everything seemed to be closing in dark around me, and I thought I had grown old all at once.

"If it should ever be like that with you, then hasten to capture fresh thoughts, so long as your strength is fresh too. People think this is impossible, simply because they will believe nothing else.

"Gradually, I came to understand this, and I sought a new wife, and in very truth recovered, as one recovers after an illness. Now I can no longer understand my grief, not even when I think of my parents and my dead wife,—they for whose sake I had wept and well-nigh choked.

"Perhaps you think it strange, but I am telling you the truth. We are like that: we forget. With my children and

my second wife I grew young again; I felt nothing but happiness round me, and even when I remember what once made me weep, that is with happiness too; and why not with happiness? for they are good and pleasant memories.

"Therefore I say this: in sooth, you may come to feel sorrow; but remember in that day that the happiness you have lost is not the only happiness life has to give; and if you believe this—and you will one day—then later you will understand that the hardest and heaviest part of your sorrow before arose from your own obstinacy."

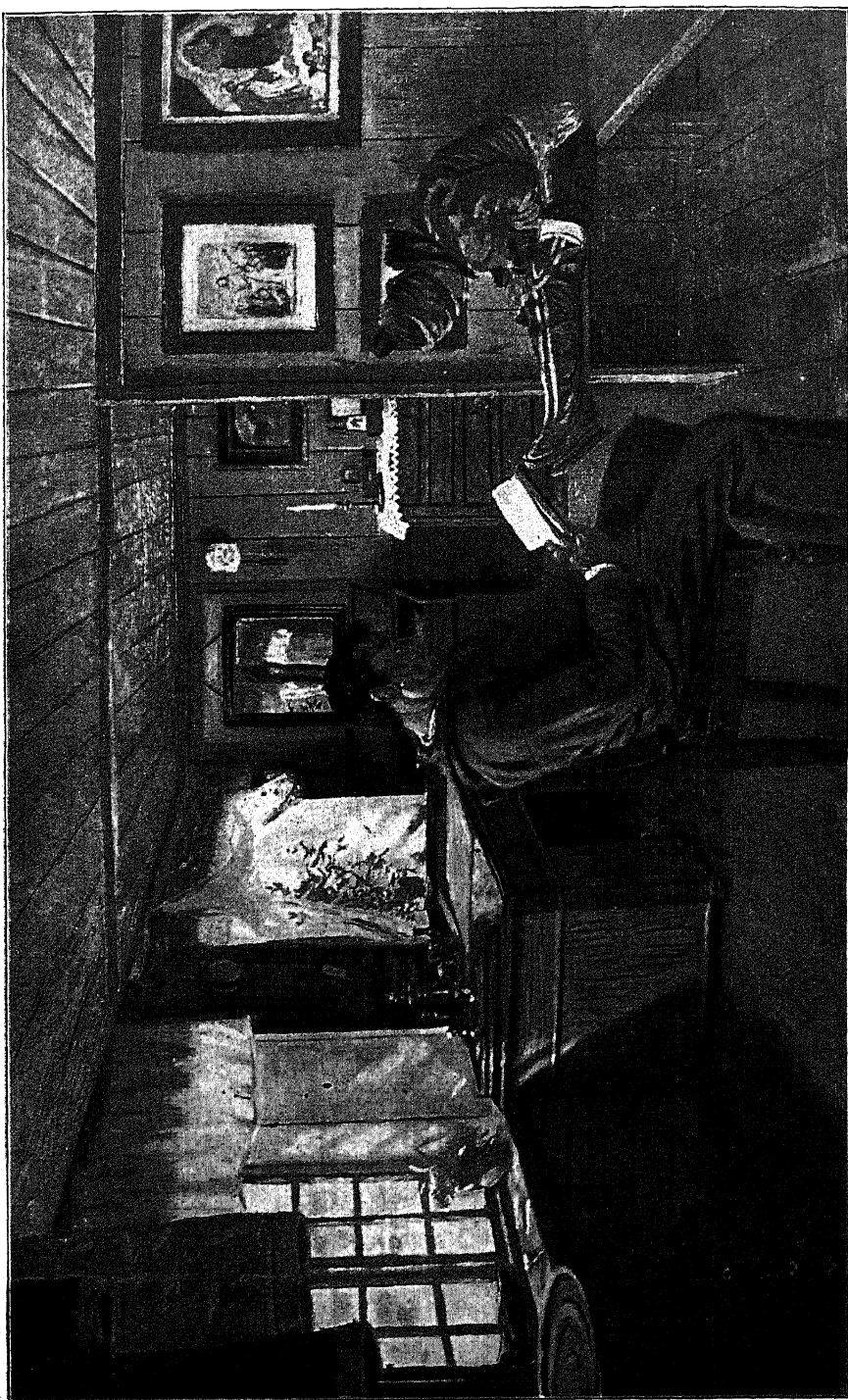
Ojuvainath lived in a roomy tent made of skins; the wide sleeping-place on which we lay at night—he, his wife, the children and I—was covered thickly with reindeer skins, which made it soft and comfortable. In a corner of the tent, on the right side of the sleeping-place, stood a large soap-stone lamp, which was never suffered to go out.

"We sleep soundly here," he used to say. "The stream lulls us all to sleep. Listen, when you lie down, and you will feel how the murmur of the splashing closes your eyes."

Some fifty paces from the tent the foaming brook emptied itself into the fjord. Up the sides of the stream the children speared salmon all day long with a kind of long hook. It was amusing to see the tiny, bare-legged boys jumping about on the wet stones in the midst of the boiling, dashing water, with all the surefootedness of grown men. Out at the mouth of the stream were spread the big nets which took the salmon when they went up the stream at high water. In July and August the salmon make their way up to two connected lakes in the mountains to spawn.

In these lakes, especially the higher and larger—it is a good six miles long—the salmon remain the whole winter through, sometimes the whole year. Part of them go down into the fjord early in the spring, and when they return, fatter for their stay, they are caught at the bottom of the stream. For about twenty years, by Ojuvainath's father and since by himself, count has been kept of the annual catch.

Far from being on the decrease, it really seems to be growing





larger. The annual catch (from July 15 to the beginning of August) ranges between sixty and one hundred barrels—that is, two to five barrels a day. Of course only a very small proportion of the salmon which go up are caught. The two lakes are consequently like great reservoirs which are never emptied. During a trip from one to the other in my kayak I saw, especially in the larger, great shoals of salmon which quite obstructed the view of the bottom.

The site of our tent was extraordinarily beautiful. On one side lay the fjord, enclosed by low cliffs; far down at the mouth of this we could just discern the open sea. Behind us was the lake, with wild and grand mountain country as a background. There, inland, the air was mild, and the vegetation as luxuriant as it always is at the head of a fjord, the ground being covered with gay flowers and with black crowberries and bilberries.

The day was spent salmon-fishing. At an early hour of the morning every one was roused, and watches were set at the nets. Ojuvainath had a whole boat's crew of hired men at his command. When work was over, after the evening tide, we assembled either inside the tent, or outside, by the pile of barrels. And then each and every one who had an adventure to relate, told it. And none of us were without.

I was very anxious to hear something of the nomad life led by the Greenlanders in the summer, and one evening, when we were sitting outside, persuaded the rest to talk about it.

The colonies and settlements here in South Greenland, not to mention the tiny villages, are almost emptied in the summer. The reindeer-hunters make their way in to the uplands, above the fjord heads; others go salmon-fishing in the brooks and streams; some again, wolf-fish catching in the creeks. The fish are sun-dried and stored as winter provision; the same with the reindeer flesh. The people start out towards the middle or end of June, remain away all the summer, in tents, and as a rule only come home in the autumn, in September. The Greenlanders love this

wandering life, and when the conversation turns on their adventures, their tales run on apace. The narrator is fired by the many eyes directed upon him; he gesticulates in illustration of his story, which is now listened to in breathless silence, now accompanied by laughter and shouts of acclamation. It is no read-up knowledge that the Greenlander spins out, but it is a fragment of his own restless life that he is retailing to his comrades; and the subject of his tale being an ever-present and actual one, his words invariably collect a lively concourse of hearers—or perhaps, too, a reverential audience.

Ojuvainath sat on one of his salmon barrels and blew out the smoke from his pipe in rings. Work was over, and the others were standing in groups round about him.

As I looked at him, a strange feeling, which I could not at once account for, came over me, an impression of being transported into long-vanished ages.

The camp behind us, and this handsome, slender man, with the powerful shoulders, sunburnt face, and sharp profile—ah! yes, I had it; he reminded me of old Homer's muscular heroes. That was just how it seemed to me they must have looked. And the proud, hot-tempered and handsome hunter, Ojuvainath, the mighty harpooner, the swift-footed, fleet reindeer-hunter—Achilles, Achilles! After that I could not dismiss the idea from my mind.

"Tell us something about your reindeer-hunts, Ojuvainath."

"It is difficult, straight off the reel like that," he replied, gazing in front of him. "And there is nothing remarkable to tell; afterwards, it seems as though one year has been just the same as all the rest. And yet every day is different, while the hunt lasts; every day brings its own joys, disappointments, and hardships.

"I hunted for twenty summers. I was barely fourteen when I began. Then I was at the age when one is eager to compete with the best; and, as there were legends afloat concerning the North Greenlanders, I went up there with an uncle—just as

a rower in his umiaq. That was as far as North Strömfjord, right up to the head. The following year I went north again, this time as master of my own umiaq. I was fifteen then. Up to my thirty-sixth year I went reindeer-hunting every summer in our own districts here, about South Strömfjord; it is only of late that I have settled down to the salmon-fishery. It pays better.

"The North Greenlanders, I must say, are better on their legs and more alert than we Southerners; they are almost too competitive. In kayaks, on the other hand, we are the best. The ice shuts them off from the sea, you see, in the winter.

"But the reindeer-hunts in South Strömfjord!

"Without a doubt it is the best reindeer district in the whole of South Greenland, especially if you go right up to the head of the fjord. And it is an excursion one does not forget. You can only go by umiaq. You fancy that your boat is standing still, and that the whole fjord is gliding past you at a giddy speed. And, as you get farther in, the pace grows faster still. Then, when you near the head of the fjord, and the country round you is opening out flatter, and more luxuriant, it will seem as though it had suddenly grown light around you, and you will imagine yourself slipping into a land lighter and more beautiful than the one you have left behind. Behind you—far, far out—you see the high rocks near the sea, tall and dark; the ridges of the cliffs, winding with the fjord, stand out against the sky like a rent in one mighty rock which slopes gradually off on the inside; and right away in is the head of the fjord, like a broad, luxuriant valley, running straight up to the inland ice.

"Down there we go reindeer-hunting with wife and children, from June to September. The umiaq is drawn up on the beach, carefully made fast, and left there for a few months. As a rule we bring nothing with us except our guns and coffee and tobacco; sometimes, perhaps, a little sailcloth tent. When we arrive, on our wanderings, at good reindeer pastures, we encamp. The women and children are left behind while the men roam the neighbouring country for a few days. The game we kill is brought home to the camp and the meat cut up into thin



cakes, which are laid out to be wind-dried on the rocks. A whole reindeer on your back for a whole day—across a heavy range of hills—is thought nothing of, so long as it is not a *very* large bull.

“At the various camps—we go farther and farther inland all the time—we make deposits of the dried meat, which is carried down to the umiaqs on our return. The day’s march is long—from early morning until late at night—and often it is



hard on little fellows of five or six ; but it makes them reindeer-hunters even before they have stood before the priest.

“The women have a bad time before they get used to it ; they have to carry many pounds weight on their backs, and it sometimes happens that they will lean their burdens against a stone and give up. And then, if you really want to tease them, you only need say to them : ‘You poor women, to have to put up with so much ! Only think of the women at home, lying on the sleeping-place, and not getting tired in the least !’ And then they burst into tears and there is no consoling them. And they curse the hunting life and vow they will never come again. But soon they grow used to sleeping outside without a tent, to walking long distances and carrying heavy loads, and then they

forget all their troubles and all their vows. And the next year, when the first reindeer-hunt is announced, the women are always the first to want to go. And when the umiaq crews are made up, and we leave the houses, many of them weep at being left behind.

"A succession of sunshiny days in which one enjoys life ; rainy days, either in tents or in caves among the rocks when you have hard work to keep up your spirits ; days when there is game and to spare ; days when you hunt in vain ; luck and ill-luck ; danger sometimes ; yes, countless experiences of that sort, all mixed up together—that is the life we reindeer-hunters lead. We all love the time, and are eager to start again every spring."

"Yes, that is true enough, but we are glad to get home again, too," broke in Alafitdle, and went on, laughing : "You must remember the time that comes when all the coffee has long been drunk, and our old pipes are all chewed up. Ah ! a tiny little bit of a pipe, just as much as will cover a tooth, cannot be paid for then with reindeer meat ! And when the older men have ground up their clay pipes, and sniffed them all up, things are bad enough. But all the same, I did not go reindeer-hunting this year, and I wish myself up there whenever I look at the hills."

"Ah ! yes ! the reindeer season !" said a young girl, and a bright look came into her eyes ; "far, far inland, near the ice-blink, behind high, high hills and great lakes, which look like huge pots full of water."

"Yes, it is strange in there, and there are many things that one never rightly understands," said an old man. "For instance, what old Evale and his wife used to tell. They saw many strange things in the reindeer country, those two old ones. Every summer they went inland, in the end quite alone, for their children were dead. They would not stay at home after the summer came, and they stayed high up the fjord, quite alone, till the autumn. Even when the man grew too old to hunt, he went there all the same.

"One night as they were lying asleep under a big stone—right up at the head of Kangerdluarssunguaq—old Evale suddenly

heard a sound that he could not understand. It seemed to come from underneath the stone below which they were lying. The sound grew louder. It grew into a music so lovely that, weeping, he waked his wife that she might hear it too. And she placed her ear to the stone, and she heard the same as her husband had heard. It was like a melody in the fog a long way off, they explained.

“And, as they listened, lying on the ground, one note of the music gradually grew louder and stronger than the rest. And it grew clearer, and came nearer and nearer, and at last they understood that the sound was a person singing; but there were many accompanying his song with instruments. And they heard words, and understood them. And the man who was singing sang as if to the two old people, for he kept on repeating the same song and the same words. At last old Evale had learnt it and began to sing it with them, words and music.

“‘The song they are teaching us is their gift,’ they said to each other, and their delight was great.

“Then all at once the woman took her husband by the arm and called, ‘Look there!’ and they both saw in front of them a country more wonderful and more luxuriant than any that they had ever seen before. And then it too—like the song—seemed to be floating in mist through the air.

“And the two old people called out each other’s names in their gladness, and went on laughing, and laughing. And they tried to go towards it, but it glided behind the hills and vanished; and the singing died away.

“Old Evale sang the song through once more for his wife; and he sang it with all the words. Then they felt tired, after all they had seen and heard, and lay down to sleep. But when they woke up the next morning they had both forgotten the song, just as you can forget in the morning what you have dreamed of in the night. All they remembered was that it was exceedingly beautiful.

“Now, whether they had dreamt it all—well, in that case, the man and his wife must both have dreamt the same thing at the same time, and we cannot understand that either.”



SUMMER EVENING IN A WEST GREENLAND COLONY (SUGAR LOAF)



"But at other times too, old Evale and his wife, on their reindeer-hunts, saw and heard things that they could never quite fathom," said another. "You know the story of the great stone with the inscription? One day they discovered, in a spot where they had often been, a large stone which they had never noticed before. The one side of the stone was quite smooth and completely covered with a variety of signs that they could not make out. The stone was black, and very highly polished. When they got home they told of their find, and the next year, when they set out, people gave them paper and pencils that they might draw the stone.

"But when they arrived at the place where it had lain they found it broken up into little tiny pieces. Not a letter could be found; all had been destroyed. Evidently it was not intended to come into human possession.

"And old Evale had his own opinion on that matter. He thought that beings lived inside it who meant only good to the Greenlanders. Doubtless the stone was very valuable, he said, and when once valuables begin to be found in Greenland, foreigners will certainly come to the country. And then the Greenlanders will as certainly fare ill, and perhaps before long there will be none of them left. So valuable things are kept hidden away from human sight!"

"Yes, that is assuredly it!" many of them said, together. "We have heard of the same thing happening to many nations. And it is not long since we heard that a long way south a whole people was exterminated, because their land was rich in gold. The strong take from the weak. And there are only a few of us up here. So our land is watched over. It will be a good thing if valuable stones never are found up here. They would bode no good to us."

The sun had set. A cold wind blew in over the fjord and reminded us that night had succeeded to day.

"Ah!—the reindeer-hunts, the reindeer-hunts!" said Ojuvainath, as we went inside his tent.

## AMONG THE POOR, IN "THE HILLS OF ILL WINDS"

IKAMIUT, *August 8, 1902.*

A TINY little house.

The door of the house no larger than a box-lid ; you enter, crawling sideways. The room so low that when you are sitting down your head touches the ceiling. The floor of granite. The walls turf and granite. The ceiling, composed of wide strips of turf, placed across driftwood. The sleeping-place so narrow that only three can sit on it side by side ; there is no stove. The only light and warmth come from a soap-stone lamp, the little train-oil lake of which is wreathed with wicks.

The place is called Ikamiut, and is included in the Sugar-Loaf District. Here, for the moment, there reside five families, divided up between three tiny earthen houses and a little mound that cannot be called a house.

I arrived here after a half day's journey in kayak from the Sugar-Loaf.

The man with whom I am staying is called Vittoralak ; the family are very poor, but they have given me of their best, dried cod and capelin, crowberries preserved in liver. Coffee I have brought myself.

The eldest daughter of the house is eighteen ; she went behind the house and cried with embarrassment when the unlooked-for visitor arrived.

Vittoralak placed food before me with a smile ; I have nodded, eaten, and laughed at the merest trifle. That is the proper behaviour for a guest, according to the Greenlandic code.

We have retired early to rest, crawled up on the sleeping-place and lain down, Vittoralak, his son, wife, daughter and I.

I lay for some time without being able to sleep. They sang an evening hymn. Seldom have I listened to any hymn more reverentially.

IKAMIUT, *August 9.*

We have not been able to go on to-day. I did not easily submit to my kayak-men's orders: early in the morning there was dead calm, clear sky, and sunshine—and yet they would not start, but told me to look at the weather; they expected rain and wind, and only in really good weather could they dare to pass the Syltop Rock with its Iceblink.

“Well, we should see what it would be like!”

Breakfast—wind-dried seal, dried capelin, two boiled black guillemot tongues, dried cod and coffee!

To while away the time I went up to the Look-out Point, with Vittoralak's son, Anase, a young man of twenty. The fishers go up there to look out, when the weather grows unsettled; from there they decide whether it is seal-catching day, fishing day, or “stay-at-home” day. The view is well worth the toil of the climb.

Down in front of one stretches the Iceblink Creek, with a large, crevassed glacier, extending right up to the inland ice, over which it seems to hang like a blue-white fog. The creek itself is squeezed in between tall razor-bill and gull rocks, capped by greenish glaciers.

To the south-west lies Imarssuaq, a broad bay opening straight into the sea, and a comfortable high-road for the south-west waves.

To right and left, tall, precipitous fjelds. There is “Hunting-Knife Hill,” and there towers “The Awl Peak,” to mention only the highest. Kangerdluarssunguaq Fjord lies to the east with a wall of rocky hills behind it, and far below us can be seen a flat spit of land with some little earthen hummocks upon it, which from here look like knobs or excrescences: that is Ikamiut, and round it sigh “the ill winds” from the hill-giants that look down upon it.

Anase tells me something of the life they lead down there, and his narrative turns, unconsciously, to talk of hardships and death.



"The breath of the hills is death to men," says Anase.

"In that creek there, Amose's kayak was capsized by a squall; that was one November day.

"Out there, during the winter, once a sudden gale rushed down on the ice and tore it asunder; that cost Sebat his life.

"Here, in Iceblink Creek, two friends were rowing together many years ago, seal-catching, in beautiful, calm weather. A south-west wind rose suddenly from Hunting-Knife Hill and thrashed the sea white. The friends were the best rowers in the neighbourhood; they could face the heaviest seas, even capsized, with kayaks bottom uppermost. But human arms cannot prevail against the onset of these sudden squalls. They can turn the whole fjord into one seething mass of foam, and the white crests of the waves dash against each other with a report like thunder. One of the friends was cast on an uninhabited coast where he was obliged to remain for several days until the storm abated. The other, the younger and stronger for that matter, was drowned. He broke his paddle, as his kayak met a heavy sea which overturned it, and afterwards he was found lashed fast to the kayak, with a broken paddle thrust in the kayak thongs. He had tried to bind the pieces together, but had not been able. Then he had lashed himself fast with his line, that he might be found one day, and buried.

"That is what the winds are like here; they hang over us, threatening us, even in calm weather. That is why they have called Ikamiut the 'Country of the Ill Winds.' In olden times they are said to have been still worse. Our old people think that the world is growing old and, as it were, weaker with age.

"Do you see that great rock up there? The peak is as sharp as a harpoon point: that is the Peak of Forgetfulness. Many years ago an old man lost his only son, through the gales. Stricken with grief, he withdrew from his fellow-men and went up in the hills. And, to wean his thoughts from his sorrow, he tried to climb the inaccessible peak. He wanted to be in danger of his own life, to forget the loss of his son, he said. And it is from that that the rock takes its name.

“Out on the promontory there stand two cairns, which you can just see from here. They were built by two friends. The survivor of the two was to think of his dead comrade whenever he saw the cairns.”

While Anase is narrating, the wind rises; it flings itself down from the hills and rushes, like a long, black shadow, across the fjords. The North Wind from the Sylspids Fjeld and the East Wind from Iceblink Creek, fight for the mastery. Meanwhile, far away, over Imarssuaq Bay, the fog is drawing in over the country. The bay is already white, far out. That is from the hardest and most refractory of all the winds, the south-west, which is now roaring in from Davis Strait. In a moment the fog has swept up. The last gleam of sunshine disappears from over the inland ice, which still shows for a long time sun-bright, through the fog.

But soon the rain pours down. Three winds meet; the North from the Syltop and the East from Iceblink Creek crash together and rush interlocked to the bottom of the fjord, while the south-west roars its victory to the hills. It shrieks, whistling and gurgling, out of a cranny in the rocks just below us, and we hear a scream like that of a human being.

“Is it the wind?” I ask of Anase.

But he has sprung up, pale as death, and to my great astonishment, begun to shout down into the cleft—

“Ho, ho! we are Christian people! You will not frighten us with your howling. Come out if you but dare!”

I jumped up and ran after him.

“Didn’t you hear him quite plainly?” he said to me, panting. “Yes; come out; we are not afraid! Perhaps you imagine that you frighten us, like silly girls or heathen? Come and face us, if you dare; fight us, if you dare!”

Anase’s face was by now crimson with excitement, and he took not the slightest notice of my questions.

“If he has not sold his soul long ago to the Devil, we shall get him; but if he has already done it, he can make himself invisible, even if he is standing just between us. Oh, it is you, you spirit, who are the reason of the bad weather!

Only come out, if you are not bound to the Devil already—for then you would not dare to show yourself to Christians!”

“Who, who?”

“A hill-man, of course! He has come up here from the south.”

And Anase broke out again into threats and abuse. His excitement was so spontaneous, and his scolding was poured out with such obvious sincerity, that it all began to work upon my imagination. I almost began to think myself that it was a man we had heard—a ghost, or a spirit, or . . .

“We ought to go down the crevasse,” I proposed.

Anase remained standing at the top. He would keep a look-out, in case anything should try to slink past.

“There, I can see his cave,” called out Anase, quite beside himself. “Come out, now we have found you! do not play at hide and seek any longer.”

I could see the hole myself now, and I had been worked up to such a pitch of excitement by Anase’s shouts that, as I approached it, I was really half prepared to find enchanted beings inside. And Anase’s constant shouts to me to be very cautious, quite convinced me that I was preparing for an encounter. I drew out my long bear-hunting knife and placed myself at the entrance, ready for anything.

“Weapons are no good with creatures of that sort!” called out Anase; “if you are not afraid, just wrestle with him.”

The hole ran in a long way, but the entrance was so narrow that I could not get through. I put my head inside, and was greeted by a damp and clammy smell.

“Take care that he does not smash your head with a stone!” called out Anase in terror, and came running down to me. He placed himself in front of the hole and shouted the name of Christ up it. There was a ringing echo inside, and, alarmed at the sound of his own voice, he fled back a few paces.

“He *shall* come out!” he shouted, and picked up a stone which he flung inside; it whistled into the darkness, and fell with a clatter, a long way in.

Anase was by now about tired. The hill-man did not

come, and we left the hole, after Anase had first blocked up the entrance with large stones.

"Now, perhaps you know how you will get out!" was his taunt, as he went.

We then descended the hill again. Anase did not speak; when I asked him a question he did not even answer. Suddenly he stopped short and looked up again at the hole, which was staring down upon us like a great eye in the rock.

"Did you not hear the sound quite plainly yourself, just now?" asked he.

Yes!—but don't you think it was the wind?" I added. "The ravine was open to the south-west. Only look out there!"

The fog lay thick, and the rain pattered against the rocks. But Anase did not vouchsafe me a reply. Once more he looked up at the hole and said, as though speaking to himself—

"I think it was the Devil himself!"

"The Devil? What do you mean?"

"Yes; the Devil, the Fiend, the Evil One incarnate, of course! He often pursues us up here in the hills, tempting us. We never see him, we only hear him."

And then he told me how one day the Devil had been after him up in the hills. He could hear him quite plainly jumping round him, till the stones gave out quite a hissing sound. Sometimes it was like iron, dragged about over the stones; sometimes like the muttering and barking of a fox. At last he had felt a hand under his jacket.

"I was so frightened," he told me, "that I began to tremble all over; I thought he must have crept inside me already and infected me with his wickedness; for that is what he wants, the old people say. And so I began to sing hymns as loudly as I could—and all the verses out of the Bible that I knew by heart. Then I grew quite calm again and the Devil lost his power over me."

"Arit!" ("You see now!") said my kayak-men to me, as I crawled into the hut, drenched through. "If we had started to-day, the squalls from the Syltinde Rock would have been hard to tackle, and no mistake."

We took our wet things off and crawled up on the sleeping-place.

"I am afraid it will be rather cheerless to-day," said Vittoralak; "we have no blubber for the lamp and it gets dark early."

"All the better! Then you can tell eerie tales about hill-men; we have just seen one."

"Now, did I not say it was he who took the angelica stalks from the girls?" said Vittoralak; and then Anase began his tale. It was listened to with rapt attention, and even my kayak-men were a little affected by the story. Finally all agreed that the bad weather that had prevailed for some time was owing to the hill-man, since such always accompanies them.

"God will make them repent it," they said.

When a Greenlander grows tired of life among his fellows, he becomes a Qivitoq: he leaves his fellow-men and lives as a hermit among the hills. A hermit of this sort becomes the terror of the district; it is quickly rumoured that a man is missing and all are seized with terror; for it is not good to meet with a hill-man.

Vittoralak is speaking. Outside it is almost dark; inside quite dark. The blubber is used up, the lamp empty. The weather is growing steadily worse. Gusts of wind beat against the house and the rain oozes through the roofing-turf.

We crouch, half clothed, on the sleeping-place, listening to the speaker. Once in a while old Alina, who is short of breath, rises, rubs her red, bleared eyes with the back of her hand, leans over me, and stops up some place that is dripping from the roof with a piece of turf or an old rag. Then she sits down on the sleeping-place again—nursing her knees, her head sunk a little forward—and falls asleep.

"It is only after the Devil has crept inside the Qivitoq that he becomes dangerous," said Vittoralak; "but that happens sooner or later with them all. It is true that some dead Qivitoqs have been found who have ended their days as good Christians, but that is rare. They are then generally found in



EVENING IN THE TENT



a cleft of the rocks, turned towards the East, with their hands folded on their breasts.

"Thus, some years ago, a seal-catcher from Kangeq named Boas became a Qivitoq. One wild day in the winter, he was seen by fishermen out beyond the Sugar-Loaf, far out at sea beyond the ice, fleeing northward. But no one dared venture so far out, in that storm, and he was never seen again. A year afterwards he was found at the head of one of the fjords in the Holstensborg District, about 240 miles from my native place, up in a cleft of the rocks, with his hands folded over his breast and his head turned to the East. He had died a Christian. But that happens very seldom. As a rule they grow so wicked that they just cannot die, and then the Devil takes them to him alive."

"Yes; but do you not think that many of the Qivitoqs whom you call possessed by devils, and immortal, have just simply disappeared—had an accident on the hills or at sea?"

"No!" replied Vittoralak very decidedly, "it is as I say, and you need not think that we are talking wildly. Hill-men always leave their fellows in anger, and for that reason Satan has his way with them easily. And besides, most Qivitoqs are very willing to associate themselves with the Devil, for they know that he will give them great magic powers. They can run like deer, and fly up the steepest rocks like birds—and they can change into animals. Many have seen them transform themselves into foxes or suddenly disappear into the earth. And they cannot die; they know that too. Many have talked with them before they have left their country for always; for when they grow very old, they journey far away north—to a country where all the hill-men gather together. There is perpetual darkness there; never light. But before they fly there, they are obliged to confess their sins to a human being. They must make themselves known, say who they are, and why they went to the hills. When they have told that they can fly north, and then they will never be seen by any human being again.

"The last time a hill-man shows himself no one need be



afraid of him, for he means no harm. First, he whistles for a long time like a bird; he has forgotten how to speak like a man. Then he begins to stammer out single words, and with great difficulty he at last regains mastery over his tongue. He then first begs the person with whom he is speaking to go a little way off, preferably to windward, best of all on a high rock; he himself takes up his position on the lee side underneath. He does all this that none of his evil thoughts may be carried by the wind to the hearer and infect him. Then he tells who he is, makes his confession, and takes his farewell of humanity.

"People who have seen them think that at this moment they regret all the evil they have done; the wrath of the Lord is upon them, for they contort their faces and their bodies—just as if the skin were contracting, and smarted. And they groan and shake all over. They weep too, but without tears, and with great pain; for the skin round their eyes is cracked.

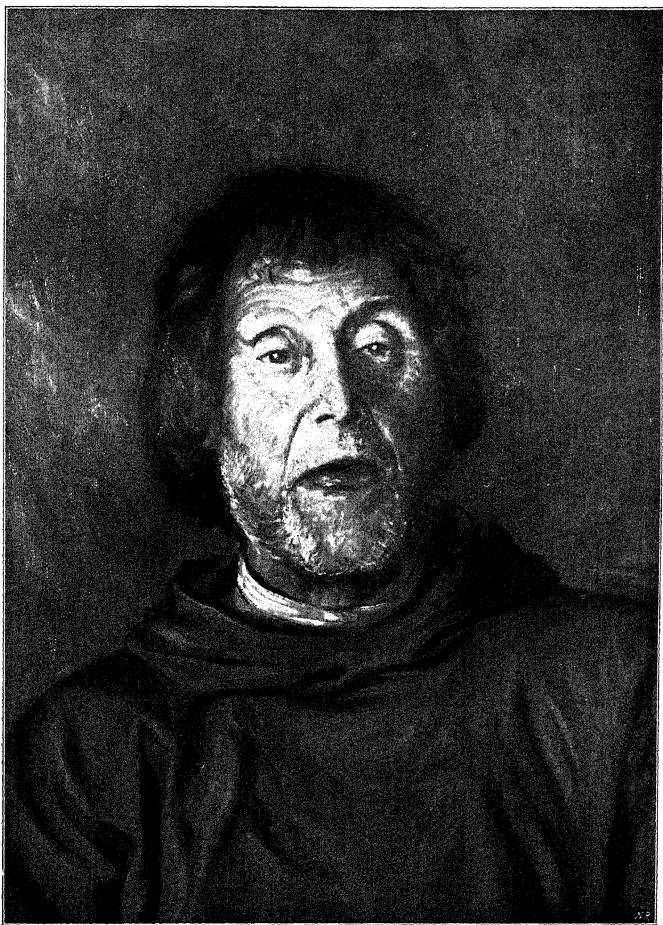
"Such a meeting always ends with the hill-man suddenly giving a leap into the air, as if seized by an invisible hand, and starting to run northward with a curious cackling sound."

Always, after gloomy stories, an eerie mood comes over the listeners. When Vittoralak ceased speaking, there was silence. One and another attempted to talk of other things, but long pauses always followed, as they do when ghost stories have engaged the thoughts.

"Can you not sing a song?" asked the daughter.

"Yes, I will!" said old Alina, straightening herself; "I will sing a song which we sang here at Ikamiut when I was a child. I only remember a little of it; my memory fails me."

And then she began to hum. Her voice came from a long distance, and it was an effort to her to get it out. It was peculiarly pathetic to hear this old, broken-down creature singing. She sat half naked on the sleeping-place with her legs crossed. She was so thin that her bones seemed ready to start through her skin. She half closed her eyes, and rocked her head backwards and forwards as she sang. Her voice was a high falsetto, which occasionally broke, and it was as shaking and



WEST GREENLANDIC TYPE  
*(From an Oil-Painting)*



decrepit as herself. And yet it filled the darkness around us with music; her song was a melancholy melody which, in its simple delivery, was quite fascinating. She sang—

“When you come from the north to Ikamiut  
A great fjeld comes in sight;  
It descends sheer into the sea.  
The top reaches to the clouds.  
A lovely woman  
Once threw herself from the top.  
That is why the rock is still blood-red.”

“Mother, don’t you know any more of the song?” asked the daughter.

“No; I have forgotten it now; but I can tell you what it is about.

“In olden times there lived here at Ikamiut a man, Ordlêna, who had a very beautiful wife, Panôna. Although he was exceedingly fond of her, he behaved very badly to her, perhaps from jealousy, because everybody admired her beauty. But the worst came when he began to torture her. He used to prick her with his kayak-knife till the blood came. But when he finally took his jagged whale-knife and drove that into her body, she ran away. She ran up the ‘Syltinde,’ just opposite. Their house was at the foot. Her husband followed her. As she was soon to become a mother, she could only climb slowly, and the man gained upon her. He called her by name, and promised that he would always be good to her for the future, but she reached the top, and before he could seize her, took a short run and jumped over the precipice. She was dashed to pieces, and her blood ran down the side of the mountain. You all know ‘Syltinde,’ the Awl Rock; the stones of the peaks are red. They say that they were coloured by Panôna’s blood. And it says so in the song too.”

We had dropped asleep, when I was invited by a shout through the window to boiled halibut at Evali’s, the house next door. It was only a few steps from entrance to entrance before I was there.

Their house was larger than Vittoralak’s, there were no

drippings from the roof, and there was a splendid blaze from their stone lamp. In a large earthenware dish on the floor lay the halibut, steaming. So we dipped our hands into the dish and soon emptied it. We were drinking our coffee, when Evali's wife cried out—

“There is some one at the window!”

And, with hardly any clothes on her body, she rushed through the passage to the entrance. A moment later she returned, bringing with her a young woman whom I had not seen before. Her knot of hair had been undone by the wind, and her wet hair streamed down over her face. She had bare legs, and her feet were swollen with water and the cold. As she shook herself at the door, the wet made a regular little pool on the floor. But she did not look in the least exhausted, and laughed all over her face as she told us that she was one of a umiaq crew that had started out from one of the fjords in the morning, before the weather broke up. During the day the storm had overtaken them and they had been obliged to land in a creek far inland, whence they had come on foot to Ikamiut.

She put on dry clothes, borrowing something from Evali's household and something from my kayak-men, and ate our leavings with the ravenous appetite that a day's journey in storm and rain can give.

When I crawled in to my hosts towards midnight, they were all asleep. Under the roof, above where I was to sleep, little tin boxes had been fastened up, with touching consideration, to protect me from the drippings of the roof.

In the middle of the night I was awakened by a faint sound above me. It was old Alina, depriving herself of her night's rest to empty the boxes when the drippings should have filled them. She leaned over me, to see if I were asleep, and then crouched up in her corner again with her head between her knees. I rose and assured her that I did not mind the drippings from the roof in the very least, and begged her to go to sleep properly. She moved, and lay down by the side of her husband. But a little later, when she thought I had gone

to sleep again, I saw her get up once more and creep into her corner. Old Alina was determined to keep awake, and was sacrificing the rest her old limbs had such need of in order to protect her guest from the rain.

KANGAMIUT, *August 11, 1902.*

I was obliged to remain at Ikamiut one more day. The wind had abated, but the rain kept on. At three o'clock this morning I was awakened by my kayak-men, who had been up to the Look-Out rock and at last announced good weather. The sun had not yet risen; but the sea was still and the sky clear.

Then Alina made coffee, and at half-past four I was sitting in my kayak. The poor family with whom I had been staying took a touching farewell of me. Of the few eatables they possessed they gave us the best. And down in the kayak they put dried capelin, cod, and a dried razorbill.

When I said good-bye, the two old people had tears in their eyes.

"I shall think of you and your mother in the winter, when it is cold and dark, and I shall pray God to bring you safely home again to those you love," stammered old Alina.

"My thoughts you know," said Vittoralak; "I do not need to say anything to you."

When we were out in the fjord we heard a shot, which echoed and re-echoed from the rocks.

That was Vittoralak's farewell; and I knew that it was his last percussion-cap.

## MOSES

THE North Greenlandic winter belongs to the Moon and Stars ; when the days contract to a few hours only, the daylight can no longer be taken into account. Even at noon the lamps must be kept burning, if there is work to be done. Should the Greenlander want to hunt seal or other big game, the day is not long enough for his task ; it would be dark before he had reached the scene of his operations, were he to trust to the little light which, during the dark season, is shed over the country.

He must content himself with the dim help which the moon and the northern lights afford, and only try to utilise the daylight while actually engaged in his work, coming and going by night.

It is a known fact that nothing has such an effect on the Greenlandic imagination as this subdued moonlight, long-continued. Everything outside looks fantastic and mysterious. The mighty rocks seem to grow still more oppressively silent, the vast ice-deserts even more interminable. A solemn stillness falls over everything. And the shadows ! The high cliffs fling dark ghosts around them, and the sledge or man who stirs abroad is pursued by his own black shadow on the white snow.

The Greenlandic nights are often very lovely, but they have a depressing effect on the people who have to live through them constantly. The silence and the loneliness take possession of the mind. Among the Danes up there, this results in nervousness ; among the Greenlanders it turns to superstition.

Late in the evenings, families gather together. Then the men arrive home with their catch, which must be skinned and cut up, and then cooked. After the meal—and as a rule they eat so much that a comfortable feeling of satiety will pervade the whole dwelling—the men and women take off the greater







part of their clothing and climb up to the sleeping-place which is practically the sofa and lounge of the Greenlandic dwelling. The men settle themselves in comfortable positions, the women bring out their fine leather embroidery from the chests of drawers, and while the women work and the men rest, in preparation for the following day, stories are told to pass the time. And it is seldom long before imagination is strung up to a high pitch.

In the course of the winter I spent many evenings in this manner in the cosy comfort of a Greenlandic home; and the majority of my most typical recollections date from them. Now it will be legends—and the stories and protagonists of these legends are the outcome of the wildest fantasy: strong men who carry on extraordinary occupations; magicians who call down destruction on a whole village; tales of subterranean happenings, of dwarfs, giants and cannibal communities;—now it will be a man's own adventures that he relates: hunting and fishing tales, ghost stories, or something equally supernatural and incredible. The Greenlanders have a great love of the horrible, and their imagination is exceedingly vivid, so that they know well how to tell a ghost story in such wise that dead silence will ensue.

I was staying for a time once at Claushavn, a colony in North Greenland.

One afternoon I drove out to get Greenland halibut for my dogs, and when I arrived at Tasingortaq, the lake at the back of the Claushavn houses, a little fellow—Moses by name, I believe—seized hold of the uprights of my sledge and begged permission to come with me. I said he might on condition that he would show me a good driving road in a direction that I had not taken before.

Moses was a dirty little fellow, badly dressed and worse bred. He had no parents, and was treated as a superfluous member of society by the other people who lived in the same house, they only tolerating him amongst them because he was occasionally able to catch sea-scorpions. I took him to be about ten years of age, but it turned out later that he was

seventeen. Everything seemed grudged to him in this world, even the power to grow.

He showed me the way over the Autdlarifik Lake, across which the Greenlanders go in summer on their fishing excursions to Tasiussaq, a deep side-arm of the Jakobshavn Ice-fjord.

It was freezing hard, and the smoke from the breath of the dogs was like mist in front of us. High, fog-veiled fjelds enclosed us; we were on a capital road; the dogs were in good galloping humour. Moses grew solemn under the influence of the silence and of the high rocks with their precipitous sides which, in the half dark, seemed about to fall upon us. And he began to tell tales.

"Have you heard about the cave far in among the rocks about here? They say that a monster lives up there. Half-eaten reindeer have been found near that cave, but no one has dared to go right up to it. People think he is a giant, who understands magic."

"Shall we set the dogs after him, Moses?"

He did not even deign to reply to such a hare-brained proposal.

Soon he began again. He could not bear for us both to be silent. But, against his will, his imagination always drew him back to that of which, for the moment, he would prefer not to think.

"Do you see all the loose stones round about? The very place for hill-spirits' caves."

He crept nearer to me. The dogs were galloping with outstretched tails and ears pricked up.

And then Moses told me a tale about a great white man who once came swimming up the lake we had driven across, while people were plucking berries on the banks. He did not see them, and lay down to bask in the sun, close to them. He had long light hair, blue eyes, and a beautiful, mild, smiling face. The berry-pickers took to their heels, but one of them, a simpleton, looked round and laughed. The spirit saw them and vanished straight down into the ground.



MIDDAY IN WINTER IN A WEST GREENLAND COLONY (JAKOBHAVN)



A flock of ptarmigan rose noisily in front of us, the dogs bayed and pressed the pace even more, while Moses, who still seemed to find the silence oppressive, began with another story.

"Up here among the rocks there are good hiding-places for all the beings that one does not quite understand about. You must have heard Otto tell of them——"

Moses stopped short in the middle of his question, looked round fearfully, and nestled close up to me.

"Tell away, Moses!"

"Listen! It is not that I am afraid of the hill people; you must not laugh at me. I am not in the least afraid, and doubtless it is all lies what they say about them. But only tell me, don't you think that it is a strange stone, that one in front of us? It is moving, it is stirring; can't you see it changing?"

"Go on telling about Otto's race! What you see in front of us is a stone. Don't you understand, Moses, that it is we who are moving?"

"Oh! yes, you are right. Heigh, heigh! Otto's race; that is one of the most unaccountable things. It was one New Year's Eve, and Otto wanted to go and look at his seal-nets.

" 'You ought not to go out on the eve of a great holy day; there are too many unnatural things about; something will happen to you,' said his mother.

" 'Mother, have you ever known me afraid?' asked Otto, and drove off. He looked at his nets, caught a seal, and was on his way back when it happened. As he was driving along the dogs began to bark, stuck their tails between their legs, stopped short suddenly, and would not stir. Otto looked round, but could see nothing. Then the dogs set off at a wild race, howling with terror, and with tails drooping. He noticed a sharp jerk at his whip, looked up, saw nothing, but noticed that the whip was pointing straight up, as though some one were pulling at it. He had almost lost his hold upon it, but managed to twist a little of the lash round his wrist and wrench it free again.

"All at once he noticed something like a whiff of wind on

his left—all the fiendish pack come from the left—and he turned round and saw a figure shoot forward just in front of the uprights of his sledge, towards the dogs. It was impossible to tell what its face was like; its right arm was raised to screen it, and its head was bent over its breast.

"The man was dressed in skins that had not been sewn, but were laced together. His boots, in particular, astonished Otto. They were of straw, plaited in a very beautiful pattern. The man flew along, but he could not be seen to make any movement. His one leg was bent, and in this position he cut noiselessly through the air. Sometimes the figure reached the dog on the left wing, and then the dog snarled and growled, and tried to go faster still.

"The spirit accompanied the sledge for a long way; sometimes it tried to get above the man, but never succeeded. It was only down at Angmalortoq—the bank was quite near to the houses—that Otto found himself alone.

"Now, what do you think it could have been?" asked Moses, in an awestruck whisper.

"Don't you think that Otto was tired, and his eyes deceived him?" I suggested.

"But the dogs? What do you think it could have been that they barked at so?" persisted Moses.

"Asukiaq!" ("I do not know!") was the answer Moses had to be satisfied with that time; I needed all my attention to steer my dogs. We flew over the ice. The dogs licked each other's noses, waved their tails, and galloped harder still. They were in grand going mood, and it was a delight to drive them.

But Moses, having nothing more to tell, had plunged deep in reflection over all the things that his little brain failed to comprehend.

It was late at night. The fog lay over the hills, and the moon, which could not pierce the clouds, shone with a subdued gleam over the country, so incomprehensibly beautiful in its wild desolation. The hills towered above us; they seemed to be looking down with a smile on all the small fry tearing along at their feet in microscopic haste.



L. MYLIUS-ERICHSEN





# THE EAST GREENLANDERS



# THE EAST GREENLANDERS

## INTRODUCTION

IN the summer and autumn of 1904, in the districts immediately north-west of Cape Farewell and at Kangigdlinguaq, I met with East Greenlandic families from the settlements south of the Angmagssalik territory, families which in separate little companies had migrated to the West coast to be baptized.

All these former East Greenlanders were, in spite of their baptism, only very slightly regenerated spiritually, and still spoke their own dialect. Their inmost convictions certainly made them acknowledge that the Christian teaching was better and wiser than their own, and for that reason they had adopted it ; but they by no means, in their hearts, considered their pagan beliefs to be deception, rather regarding them as something forbidden them by their new faith.

All the pagan mysteries, all the supernatural forces which used to be the helpers of the magicians, still existed, but *dared* not or *would* not reveal themselves any more to those who had betrayed them to the Christians by their conversion.

There were formerly many people along the East coast, they told me ; they lived in large houses, which could accommodate the crews of several umiaqs. In the winter, especially, they led a gay life up there, and for whole evenings they would entertain themselves with spirit incantations, duet-singing, insult-songs and the telling of old legends.

It was a happy time—but a dangerous time too.

During the other seasons of the year there was plenty of hard work to be done, to provide provisions and clothes for the winter. Then they settled in separate tents, in the neighbourhood of the good hunting-places. Each day brought its

own incidents. The interest of the men was absorbed by their hunting, the women flaked meat for drying, and prepared skins. All toiled till they were weary, slept heavily, and were only anxious to be good and kind to one another.

But in the winter, when numbers of people were gathered together and the larders were full, and the only thing the desires centred upon was the shortening of the long, idle winter nights, things would be quite different. Much food and sitting still, the desire to be up and doing, and the craving for change and relaxation, made the people pick quarrels with each other; old grievances were resuscitated; scorn and mockery and venomous words egged on to outbursts of anger, and in the midst of the winter feasts regrettable incidents sometimes occurred, when men and women, with tempers sur-excited by ambition and the goading on of the other people in the village, forgot all fellow-feeling and often, on the most extraordinary pretexts, challenged each other to insult-songs, fought duels, and committed the most appalling murders.

Murderous desire in some cases developed into absolute mania, and the tales, invariably the records of actual experience, which I heard amongst these newly-baptized East Greenlanders, were such as to produce upon one an impression very different from one's usual conception of the peaceable Eskimos.

And these accounts seem to me to have a twofold interest, portraying, as they do, the last convulsive fight for existence of an isolated race.

All the South-east Greenlanders have now, with the exception of one family, migrated to the West coast and been baptized; and they will soon be absorbed into the population there.

During my stay among them I wrote down a number of their traditions and legends, as well as a short vocabulary.

The last immigrants arrived in the summer of 1900, and they said that one family had remained behind in their country; this consisted of old Kunigsarfik ("Kissing Gear"), his wife, two sons, three daughters and a son-in-law. The old pater-familias had been challenged by Autdârutâ ("The Umiaq"),—the leader of the new arrivals,—who accused him of having

stolen the souls of his brothers and sisters ; and the old man, not having dared to accept the challenge, had fled north when all the others left, and since then nothing had been heard of the family. Either they are still living in some remote little place or other, quite alone on that vast, empty coast ; or they have died of hunger during a bad hunting year.

Of their journeys to the West coast in general, I will only say here that, according to old Nuissartog's account (she is now baptized and known by the name of Rosine), such have taken place ever since the East coast from Umîvik southward has been inhabited ; but after Nalangarajik's (Graah's) stay among them, they began to go west to settle and be baptized. Graah had told them to do so, and several umiaqs had gone with him. It would happen, too, that people from all the way up to Angmagssalik would go down to trade on the West coast ; but that was more rarely, as it meant an absence of three or four years for the journey there and back. As a rule, therefore, they restricted themselves to barter for goods with the people farther south, who had been at the trading-place.

Rosine told me that the Angmagssalik people were the most northerly dwelling that she knew. She had certainly heard tell that still farther north there lived some extraordinary people, who had no buttocks ; they did not eat, but only sucked the nourishment from meat. But for many generations nothing had been seen of them, and now they are only known through the old legends.

In what follows, I shall depict a few episodes from life, in South Greenland and South-east Greenland, during the time of the breaking up and emigration.

As it seems to me that the Eskimos' own views and accounts of matters are of the greater human interest, my narrative will keep as closely as possible to the tales I heard from my various sources of information and the actual expressions I heard used. I feel it is only in this way that the account of these human destinies can retain its full educative importance.

I expressly preface these remarks, in order that no one may

think I am "making copy" on the basis of facts that I have collected.

It was no easy matter at first to learn anything connected and coherent at all. This was because these people had, for one thing, repented of their past, and moreover, for a very long time had been accustomed to hear their pagan practices condemned by the priest and by their new compatriots.

There were all sorts of rumours afloat concerning me, when I arrived at the camp,—chiefly hawked about by old Christian women whose tongues required a little exercise. And of course rumour exaggerated and lied, as rumour always does. So I determined to begin by doing nothing, but simply to live amongst them, be as communicative as possible myself, and wait for an opportunity when the desire to narrate should overmaster their reserve.

I succeeded at length in winning the confidence of the newly-baptized people, and during my life with them, they gave me, without circumlocution, descriptions of the events that had been mainly responsible for their determination to migrate to the West coast and their resultant conversion to Christianity. Rarely has more animal conduct been practised by people possessing by nature unvitiated hearts; never have isolation and intellectual stagnation driven good people to more insane brutalities.

But I feel it my duty, before I proceed to the narrations, to emphasise the fact that I have rarely, in the course of my travels, lived with more cheerful, more amenable and good-humoured people than these East Greenlanders, who, had they lived in a civilised state, would have paid the penalty of the law for the most ghastly murders.

The light thrown upon the tragedies which have been played out among these solitary tribes on Greenland's eastern coast, is also of scientific importance; *for these tragedies, recounted by eye-witnesses, demonstrate that the old Eskimo legends to a far greater extent than has hitherto been believed, are the Eskimos' own history*, which has been handed down by oral tradition to subsequent generations. It has been thought

that the greater number of the legends, which reveal appalling cruelty, were the outcome of imagination, and only had their origin in some slender occurrence which had been decked out for general entertainment. The many heartless things that are spoken of: "Men who eat their wives;" "Orphans who are ill-treated;" "Remorseless massacres of women;"—subjects that are very frequently treated of in Eskimo legend,—are undoubtedly all experiences that have been conscientiously repeated from generation to generation. The recent true stories from the East coast prove this.

There is no people with a history which, as regards the bitterness of its struggle for existence and the eeriness of its memories, can be compared with that of the Eskimos.

Hitherto one has always heard good-nature and peaceableness brought forward as the qualities that most peculiarly distinguish the Eskimos.

"They are so good-natured and so harmless!"

Yes, true enough; they *are* good-natured, and filled with a thirst for peace, in spite of all. And the more admirable are they! But do not for that reason forget that they are, first and foremost, men and women formed by the nature surrounding them.

The mind of the Eskimo can be calm and sunny like the water on a summer day in the deep, warm fjords. But it can likewise be savage and remorseless as the sea itself, the sea that is eating its way into his country.

Sophie Poulsen it was who gave me my first information. Her name was originally Besuk. When she came to the West coast with three umiaq crews in 1900 she was Neqigssanoq's second wife. Neqigssanoq received in baptism the name of Emanuel. Sophie's companion wife was her elder sister, Singime, christened in baptism Helena.

As they had the intention of being baptized, they were told to settle down in Frederiksdal, the old Moravian settlement south of Julianehaab, and there to attend a course of instruction, as a prelude to baptism, from the priest.



Emanuel was at once obliged to renounce the wife that he had taken last. It was an old practice among the missionaries at that place for the Church to recognise only the first wife as a man's real wife, quite regardless of the man's own feelings in the matter ; the other wife was then declared a widow.

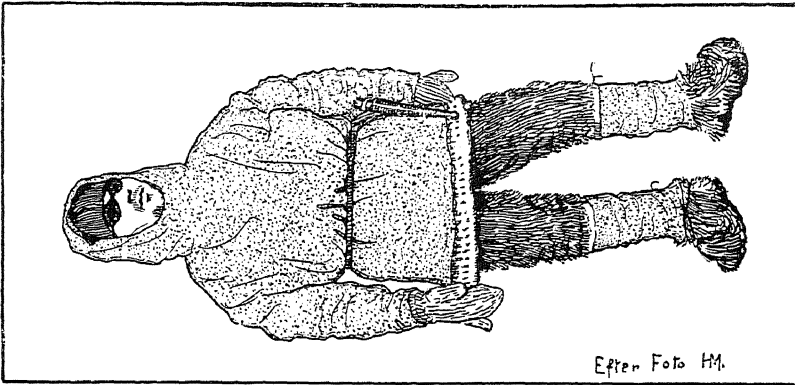
Thus it happened that Sophie, who had always been her husband's favourite wife, had to withdraw in favour of her elder sister, and adopt the black band round the hair which is worn in Greenland by widows.

Sophie thus suddenly found herself without a provider, and her little daughter, who remained with her, was supposed to be fatherless. No public assistance was given to her ; if matters had come to the point of her requiring any, it would have had to be pauper help. (The fact that the priest was privately exceedingly kind to Sophie does not affect the question.)

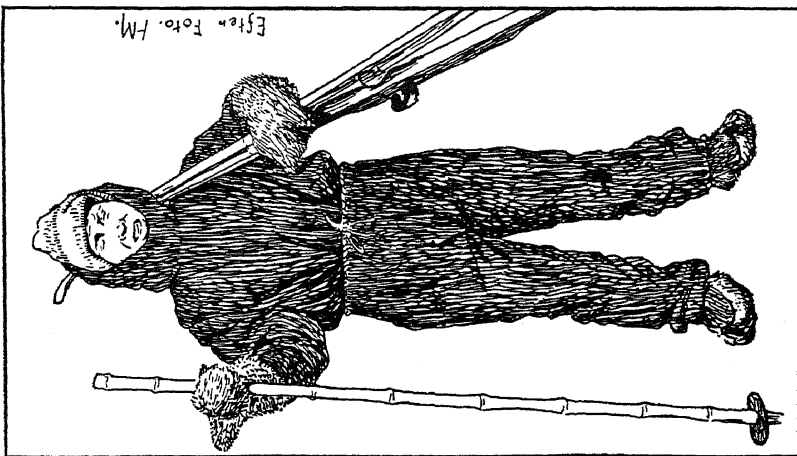
The worst of it was that after the separation had been enforced by the Church Emanuel considered himself to have no obligations towards his former wife and daughter. The two were recommended to a family where they received food and lodging, on condition of the mother doing all the domestic work of the house. Clothes she would have to provide herself with, and this was not always an easy matter.

It is an old custom in South Greenland that every one who comes down to where there is a freshly-caught seal, gets a share of it ; a little piece of blubber from the breast, from three to four inches long and a good inch across—with the skin on it. This is eaten raw, with the skin and hair, and is called *tamorassâq* ("chewing morsel"), because it is so agreeable to chew ; you can go on chewing a *tamorassâq* for an hour. It is much appreciated by kayak-men on long journeys after seal ; they declare that if you have a *tamorassâq* in your mouth, you get neither hungry nor thirsty.

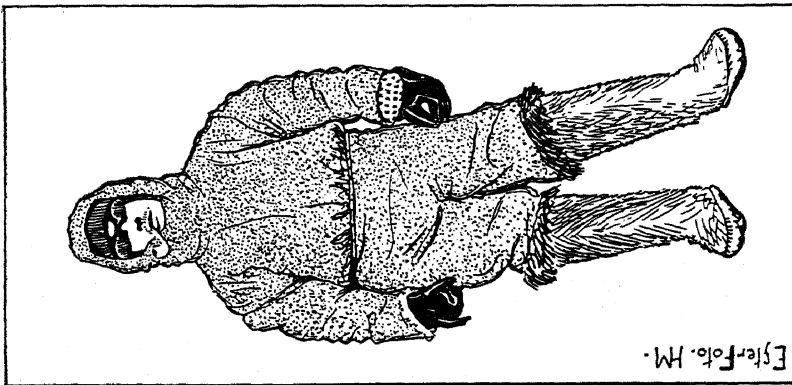
These little pieces, which she could get by going down to the beach when the catch was being towed home, she put together in the spring and sold. In this way she managed to scrape a few pence together, which she spent on clothes ; but of course it was very difficult to make two ends meet, and she



COUNT HARALD MOLTKE



JØRGEN BRÖNLUND



KNUD RASMUSSEN



was generally obliged to be content with old, left-off clothes, which she pieced together.

The separation made a profound impression on Sophie, and at the present time she hates both her sister and her husband with all her heart. For that matter the relations between her sister and herself had never been good, as they were both very jealous.

“‘I will have him all to myself!’ I used to say to my sister, but of course she said the same to me, and as my husband generally preferred me, because I was younger, my sister was always unkind to me,” explained Sophie.

So she cannot forgive her husband for failing her. “Do not talk of the shameless fellow!” she says, when he is mentioned. But neither does Emanuel himself seem to have been quite satisfied with the decision of the Church. This is evident from the following little incident which Sophie related to me.

One dark evening last winter, when she had to go and fetch water from the common watering-place, she heard a crackling in the snow behind her. When she looked round, she saw a man running after her, and recognised Emanuel.

She was alarmed, turned back at once, and cried out—

“No, no! I will not have anything more to do with you!”

And she started running as fast as she could. He ran after her, took a short cut, caught her up, and was about to seize her by the shoulder, but she sprang on one side, twisted herself from his grasp, and ran on.

“Wait, wait a moment; I have something to say to you!” called Emanuel.

“No; you have nothing more to say to me!” replied Sophie, beginning to scream, to attract people’s attention. Then Emanuel stopped and called after her—

“It is easy to see that it is not you who go about ready to cry.”

After that he made no effort to see her again.

During my stay in the camp, this Sophie told me, by degrees, the whole eventful history of her tribe during their last years

on the East coast. And when I once had these facts as a basis, it was not so difficult to get the information for which I was seeking, by questioning the others.

In the following, I have endeavoured to keep as closely to the original Eskimo tales as is possible in translation.



## THE DOMESTIC DRAMA OF LINDENOW'S FJORD

BESUK is narrator.

There was once a man named Oqartaqangitseq ("The Tongueless"), and he lived at Lindenow's Fjord; we had our winter quarters then at Nunagssuk, close by.

Oqartaqangitseq had three wives: Atarajik, Qiorartok, and Katiaja, and they lived in a constant state of quarrelling and jealousy.

One evening Katiaja, the youngest of the wives, flew into a temper because the husband would not lie down by her side—he had preferred Atarajik—and so she jumped up on the sleeping-place, cut down a bearded seal's bladder that was full of gunpowder, flung it down on the floor, ripped it open with a curved-knife, and put a blazing wick to it.

There was a terrific explosion. The house was blown up, and one of the persons inside was shot out into the snow. All who were in the house with, strangely enough, the exception of Katiaja, were burnt quite black and their skin scorched all over.

Oqartaqangitseq and Atarajik, who had two little ones, did not think for a moment of themselves, although they were the most badly burnt. They carried their little ones out into the snow and rubbed their poor, raw bodies with soft snow; only when they were on the point of freezing did they take them to their breasts, and breathe on them to make them warm again. The house was quite wrecked. They could not get in again, at once, for the stifling powder smoke; but when the smoke had by degrees cleared off, they crawled in and lighted a lamp. Then it was seen that Atarajik's body was scorched from head to foot; all the skin had been burnt off. The children were

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not so bad, but still they were in a sad state. They could not remain in the house, and so the next day they left the hamlet, by umiaq, and came up to us.

But Atarajik they were obliged to leave behind to die ; she was so exhausted that they could not even help her down to the umiaq.

One day, during the same winter, I went to look at the wrecked house ; it looked very uncanny and still smelt of gunpowder.

In a corner lay the remains of Atarajik. Her body was quite black ; the ravens had pecked out her eyes, and eaten part of her shoulder, so that the white bones projected. Poor Atarajik ! No one had thrown her into the sea.

Her husband, however, whom they managed to get down to Nunagssuk, had a fine death. When they brought him there he lay in the bottom of the umiaq with a few skins thrown over his burnt body. He suffered agonies, and could hardly speak ; you had to put your ear close to his mouth to understand him.

He lay in the house for a few days groaning with the pain.

But he grew tired of it at last, and told his wives to take him down to the sea.

They knew then that he did not mean to live any longer, and so they dressed him in hunting clothes, as we do with dead bodies. His face contorted with agony, as they drew the fur down over the deep wounds ; then his wives carried him out, and placed him on a slope that dipped into the sea.

A south-west wind was blowing and it was wretched weather ; a high surf was breaking in towards the land.

They say that as he sat crouched in a heap on the rock there, and looked down at the breaking waves, he hesitated a moment. When his wives saw it, they proposed to take him back into the house again. They would have liked to keep him as a husband, he was such a good hunter.

The wind was blowing hard and a blinding snow was falling. The man writhed and twitched with agony, every time the snowdrift swept over him.

"No, I shall never be a man again!" he said, and flung himself into the sea.

Katiaja, the murderess, was an extraordinary woman. She was tall and handsome, with a light-coloured skin. She had the strength of a man and went out hunting while she was still unmarried, like the men. She generally had more dogs than they had.

I remember so plainly how one winter morning she went out hunting seal before it was light. The day had hardly dawned before she drove back with a huge bearded seal on her sledge. The men were hardly astir by then; and this huge seal (weighing from 600 to 700 lbs.) she had dragged up on the ice herself. She could row a kayak, too, and hunt with the harpoon; she was even more successful than the men. Yes, she was a remarkable woman, and an entertaining companion and amusing to be with,—but dangerous.

When she married she left off going hunting. After the murder of her husband and the other wife, she committed another murder. The victim was Ijajup's widow; I cannot rightly remember what her name was, probably Niarajuak.

The widow was quite innocent, but Katiaja accused her all the same of injuring her fellow-villagers by incantations.

It was all lies.

One fine day Katiaja attacked the widow with a gun. She fired, but did not kill Niarajuak, who ran away, but soon fell down, for she was badly hurt. And then Katiaja left her bleeding in the snow, without having quite killed her.

But one of the women of the place had compassion on her, and took a large stone and smashed her skull.

## THE DEATH OF SAKUA

WE were living at the same fishing-place as my husband's two brothers, Adam and Christian.

Christian's name then was Autdârutâ ; he was a magician, and a passionate and dangerous man. He took Sakua for his second wife just about that time. Sakua was one of those who had escaped alive from the burning of the house at Lindenow's Fjord.

She was a nice girl, and Christian was very fond of her ; but she and Christian lived together on the most extraordinary terms. At times he was very much in love with her, and showed her favour at the expense of his other wife. At other times he would repudiate her and drive her out of his house. He reproached her for not giving him children.

Then one day when they had been quarrelling, he rushed at her suddenly in a fury and threw her out. She went weeping up the cliff, close to our dwelling, and Christian seized his gun and dashed out after her.

When she saw him, she stopped and turned round.

"What do you want ?" she asked.

"You are a miserable woman who cannot bear her husband children," cried Christian, spitting and fuming with rage. "You do not deserve to live."

And then he fired at her.

The shot hit her in the right breast without killing her.

"What are you doing that for ?" she said, as she fell.

Without a word and wild with anger, he flung himself upon her and struck her on the head with the butt-end of the gun ; but as that was no use either, he called to a little boy who was playing near the house with an arrow. The boy brought him the arrow, and Christian drove it through her throat, so that at last she died.

Then he cut her up, dismembered every joint, severed her head from her body, and threw it out into the sea.

But before he left the body, he cut out her warm heart and ate it.

Then he dragged her along the ground, a little way from the beach, and left her there.

There I saw her, lying face downwards in the snow.

The day afterwards we all left that place, on a fishing expedition.

## THE MURDER OF KATIAJA

BLOOD had driven Christian mad ; he was not properly himself, and it was not long after the murder of Sakua before we noticed he had evil in his heart again. He had been saying that Katiaja ought not to live, she, who had murdered so many. And so one day he went in to her and said—

“ May you have a painful death one day, you, who imagine that only you ought to live ! ”

Katiaja began to tremble all over with fright when she heard this, for she knew then that she was going to be killed, and that all she had left to do was to wait.

A few days before a person is murdered, it is usual to let fall some remark allowing the victim to understand that he or she will soon die. This is done to torture one's enemies with the fear of death.

Christian had declared before, soon after Katiaja had blown up her husband and fellow-wife, that he would find a way of avenging them on the woman. So we others had known a long time that she would be killed, but none of us had dared to tell her, to give her a chance of escaping in time to other people, for if any one goes chattering to another who is appointed to die, that person will have to die himself. As they are carefully watched, it is impossible for any condemned to death to escape.

Katiaja sat for two days crouched in a silent heap on her sleeping-place, shaking with terror of death—you could hear her teeth chattering in her mouth.

Christian's mother never ceased to egg him on to the murder.

“ Kill her ; she alone will live,” she repeated. Katiaja, you must know, had once said, in anger, that she was the only person who deserved to live.

The day after Katiaja had heard that she was to die, Christian began to take counsel of his helping-spirits. He did so in company with Qiorartoq, Katiaja's former fellow-wife. We heard him talking inside to his helping-spirits, and fear seized us, for we knew then that Katiaja had not much time left.

My husband came up to me as I stood at the door and said—

“Go out of the house, for the lust of murder is coming upon Christian.”

Every one went out, no one dared to speak; they went restlessly in and out among the houses and started at the slightest sound.

Adam, Christian's elder brother, had gone away with his family the day before; he would not be in the village when the murder took place.

Then suddenly we all stood still in the snow outside and held our breath. Christian had broken off his song abruptly and we heard him shout; and his voice rang out with such power that one would have thought he was the only living being on the whole coast.

“They all say that she shall be killed to-day. To-day she shall die!”

Then Christian went out and loaded his gun; and he looked as if a mighty rage had taken possession of him. He ran up to Katiaja's house, and looked in through the window; but he could not discover where she had hidden herself. So he went in through the passage, but he could not see her from there either: she was crouched in a heap in a corner of the sleeping-place. He would not go inside to her; it seemed as though all at once he had grown afraid of her. Then my husband, Emanuel, climbed on the top of the house and began to tear the roof off; he made an opening, and through it they could see where she sat.

Then Christian ran to the window again and screamed in to her, in anger—

“You thought that you alone should live; and so you killed

other people. Hear then, Katiaja. Now you shall die yourself. And may you draw your last breath in agony!"

Katiaja made no reply. Christian raised his gun to his cheek and fired through the window; the shot tore her breasts off, but she did not utter a sound.

Christian and my husband then rushed into the house and dragged the dying Katiaja out.

Inside, in a corner, stood Katiaja's little daughter; she was about four years old. She did not understand what was happening, and began to scream when she saw them drag her mother out.

Outside the house, Christian opened the body and cut it into pieces, just as he had done with Sakua's. He ate Katiaja's heart too; he did this to prevent the soul of the dead avenging itself upon him. Then he covered up the corpse with a few stones.

Then, when Katiaja was dead, every one went round and said to the murderer: "Qujanaq! Isumangnaeqingigput!" ("Thank you, thank you! now she is out of our thoughts!") They said this to flatter Christian, for every one was afraid of him.

It was determined next that the daughter of the murdered woman should die too. No one wished to have her in his house, no one felt any inclination to feed and clothe her, no one cared about the little orphan. The little girl's name was Katiarajik, almost the same as her mother's.

So, one evening, after it was dark, one of the women took Katiarajik by the hand and led her out among the hills, a little distance from the houses, and left her there, that she might die of cold and hunger.

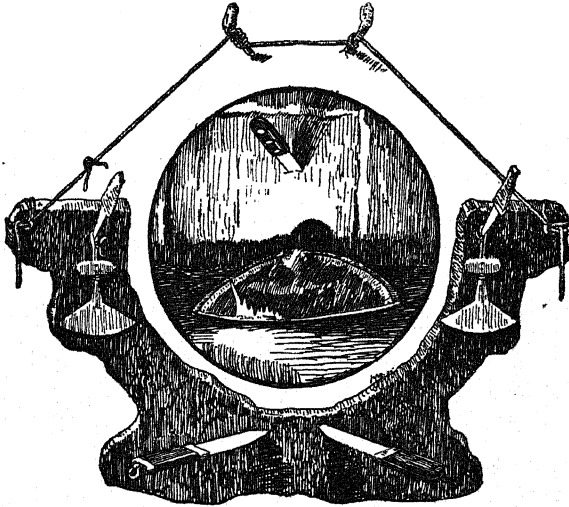
Poor little Katiarajik! As we sat inside we could hear her screaming and calling for her mother. She screamed herself hoarser and hoarser, and at last there was silence; we thought that she had lost her way at last among the rocks, in the dark.

But all at once the door flew open; the little one had found her way back, and stood there on the floor, shivering with fear and cold.

There was a moment's silence ; then Qitsuala—she is baptized now and lives here at the trading settlement—sprang up from the sleeping-place, took the little girl by the arm and led her out again.

A little way from the houses she dashed Katiarajik's head against a sharp stone, and left her outside in the snow.

This happened in the winter ; in the late spring we all went away and came down to the West coast to be baptized.



A BLUBBER LAMP



## AVIAJA AND HIS FAMILY

ONE evening after dark I went for a walk in the hills with Puarajik, baptized in the name of Henrik, a young man of nineteen.

A stiff north wind had been blowing all day, with sleet and rain, but towards evening the sun had come out and the wind moderated. It was difficult to find our way in the dark, and we splashed again and again into pools of water that we could not see. It was a lovely evening. A broad belt of northern lights shot out over the hills in the background, and cast a flickering glow over the booming sea.

"Those are the dead, playing ball," said Henrik, of the northern lights. "They say that they run about up there without trousers on. . . . See! how they fly about.

"Oh! it is so pleasant here among the Christians," went on the newly-baptized Henrik; "for here you do not go about always dreading lest you should be murdered. I was never really safe, on the East coast, for I was an orphan. It was horrible with all the murders; when they once began murdering they would get quite mad.

"There was once a murderer who drank the blood of his victim; he ate seaweed with it. He ended by quite draining the body.

"I was always in terror of Christian over there. It is true that it was my father who taught him to be a magician; but all the same—you never can tell.

"Now you shall hear how a whole family was wiped out in the course of one winter.

"Oqartaqangitseq had lost several children, they having died of illness, one after the other. He was a great magician,





and so he held spirit incantations about it; and his helping-spirits told him that it was a man in the place, Aviaja, who had stolen his children's souls.

"Oqartaqangitseq then murdered Aviaja, and Christian helped him.

"As usual, they cut the body to pieces, put the head in a kayak bladder, and threw it into the sea. The rest of the dismembered body was covered up with stones.

"But the eyes were cut out of the head, and old Peruvatsiaq, Christian's mother, had them in her stone lamp all the winter. This was to blind the soul, if it wanted to avenge itself.

"The evening after the murder, Aviaja's wife came in despair to inquire after her husband. She knew nothing of what had happened.

"'He must have been murdered!' she cried, weeping, in through the window, and then ran off to look for him. It was late at night before she came back, wailing. She had found him.

"And then she shut herself in her house with her six children to mourn.

"We were living at Anoritôq then; it was towards the end of the autumn when Aviaja was murdered. Later in the winter a famine broke out in the place; south-west wind, snow, and no seal-catching. We were obliged to eat our kayak skins, and a bear-skin that had been put away to trade was cut up and eaten too.

"Aviaja's widow could not keep herself alive through the famine time. None of the others helped her and her six children—no, it is true, she had killed the smallest one soon after the murder; she had crushed the little one's chest against a stone and buried it with the father.

"When the woman saw that they would all perforce die of hunger before long, she preferred to kill herself and the children at once. They were very weak with hunger, and could hardly rise to their feet. The two eldest, who were almost grown up, threw themselves into the sea when their

mother told them to do it; the others the mother was obliged to throw in herself.

"Yes, and then there was the youngest little son; he ran down to the beach himself; he was the least emaciated, for the older ones had always given him food from their portions.

"The mother then explained to him that he was to go down to the dead who lived in plenty and free from care under the sea; he had only to jump into the sea and his mother would follow him. The boy did it, and was drowned.

"But the mother herself walked out on a rock, turned her back to the sea, and jumped over backwards.

"Thus Aviaja and his whole family died."

Henrik has ended his narration; we are sitting on the stone in silence.

A man looms out of the dark and stands on a ridge of rock. He has not seen us, and calls us, by name.

It is Christian, come to invite us to a meal of freshly-caught seal.

## AUTDARUTA, THE MAGICIAN

STRANGELY enough, I had read about Christian before I myself met him ; in a little missionary paper I had seen a few lines that made me anxious to know him.

In a diary kept by his priest during the baptismal instruction, under the heading of a date that I no longer remember, had been written :—

“ Sometimes I am seized with an incomprehensible disquiet when I have to instruct Christian. I have a feeling that it is Satan incarnate whom I have before me.

“ To-day, as I was about to start out to my teaching of the heathen, I was again seized with this terror of facing Christian ; and I was obliged to let them wait while I went down to the seashore to fortify myself in solitude by prayer to Almighty God.”

Chance brought me in contact with this said Christian, and after living with him for some time, I managed to win his confidence. But I never could quite fathom him. His eyes always made me doubtful.

I only remember to have seen that timorous, despairing look in the eyes of a stricken reindeer.

Sometimes a twitch would shoot across his face that would give him an extraordinary resemblance to a tired and tamed wild beast.

And that was about what he was. The ruthless murderer had been appalled one day by his own deeds ; and now he was tamed—though whether it were the priest or the remembrance of his own deeds that had restrained him, who shall say ?

Before I left the district I had an opportunity of going on a journey with Christian, who, in the meantime, had grown very much attached to me, and would have followed me farther had

he not fallen a victim to a bad attack of scurvy, which obliged him to enter the Julianehaab Hospital.

For a long time we resided alone in a church loft, and it was more particularly during that time that we had our talks.

On the East coast Christian had been a magician, and when he spoke of that time I certainly received the impression that he still believed in the existence of certain supernatural forces and beings whom he could force to do his will. With me he had no temptation whatever to dissemble; on the contrary, as a baptized convert, it was to his interest to draw a line through his past.

He gave me the following account of his training as a magician :—

“When my father died, I often went out for long rambles among the hills, because I felt that I had been left alone. It was at the season when stone-crop springs up, and I gathered it, to preserve in blubber for the winter.

“One day, up among the rocks, I heard some one begin to sing; I looked, but could see no one.

“‘Now why should I have heard this song?’ thought I to myself, and went home.

“The next morning, towards daybreak, I went up again to the hills, and then I heard the same thing again; it was some one beginning to sing. ‘Now why is this happening to me?’ thought I. Just then I saw two men coming towards me. They were inland-dwellers.

“‘We were sorry for you, because you were an orphan; so we have come to help you,’ they said, and so they became my first helping-spirits. Then I began to be a magician, but did not speak to any one about it. The year afterwards we moved south; that was in the season when the small birds come, and we settled down in company with an old and much venerated magician. He could not stand upright, and could only walk by propping up his thighs with his arms. He could not carry his kayak up and down himself, and so it came about that I used to help him.

“One day he came and said to me—



OLD HUNTER, WEST GREENLAND





“‘Travel east with me, and I will teach you something; you may need help yet, you poor, fatherless boy.’

“So we travelled together, and he told me on the way that he was going to make a great magician of me. We went ashore up a fjord, close to a cave, and the old man took off his clothes and crept inside. And he told me to watch carefully what happened next. I lay hidden a little way off and waited. It was not long before I saw a great bear come swimming along, crawl ashore, and approach the magician. It flung itself upon him, crunched him up, limb for limb, and ate him.

“Then it vomited him out again and swam away.

“When I went up to the cave, the old man lay groaning. He was very much exhausted, but was able to row home himself. On the way back he told me that every time he allowed himself to be devoured alive by the bear he acquired greater power over his helping-spirits.

“Some time afterwards, he took me on a journey again, and this time it was so that I myself might be eaten by the bear; this was necessary if I wished to attain to any good. We rowed off and came to the cave; the old man told me to take my clothes off, and I do not deny that I was somewhat uncomfortable at the thought of being devoured alive.

“I had not been lying there long before I heard the bear coming. It attacked me and crunched me up, limb by limb, joint by joint, but strangely enough it did not hurt at all; it was only when it bit me in the heart that it did hurt frightfully.

“From that day forth I felt that I ruled my helping-spirits. After that I acquired many fresh helping-spirits and no danger could any longer threaten me, as I was always protected.

“Once I had been out seal-hunting far out at sea in my kayak, and was towing a large bearded seal home to land; not suspecting danger, I paddled slowly forward. The sea was quite calm. All at once I found myself surrounded by many kayaks and saw a umiak come rowing towards me.

“‘We will have both the man and the bearded seal in the umiak!’ they exclaimed, and immediately they lay up alongside

my kayak and began to unloose the towing-line my seal was fastened to.

"I had shipped my oars, and was only waiting for what might happen next, as it was impossible for me to defend myself against so many.

"Then all at once a great commotion arose among the strange kayaks; they belonged to the fire people, who live in a country which is said to lie between the sea and the land.

"The fire people began to flee, and when I tried to discover what was happening, I saw that they were pursued by a kayak of remarkable appearance. The prow of it was like a great mouth, which kept opening and shutting all the time; and if those in its path did not move away quickly, they were simply cut in two. I think that the umiak and the kayaks all sank to the bottom of the sea, for they were gone at once. That is the peculiarity of the fire people; they can appear suddenly, but they can disappear again just as suddenly.

"Then afterwards the man with the dragon in his prow came back to me and told me that he himself belonged to the fire people, but that he had helped me because he knew that I was a great magician. After that he became my helping-spirit.

"Later on, I had a great many helping-spirits among the fire people, and they were often of great assistance to me, especially when I was overtaken by a storm or by foul weather. When I made up my mind to journey to the West coast to be baptized, they appeared to me and urged me not to do so. But I did what I willed, all the same. Since then they have not shown themselves to me, because I betrayed them by my baptism."

In the evening, when we had lighted our little train-oil lamp, he would sit and tell me stories and relate strange experiences of his on the East coast. It was soon noised about the place what we were up to, Christian and I, when we refused our numerous invitations out to meals in an evening.

It was rumoured that Christian was relating legends, and it



YOUNG GREENLANDIC WOMAN FROM NORTH  
DISTRICT, UPERNIVIK



was not long before all the people in the place, old and young, began to collect outside our loft to listen. They received permission to come in, when a great impetus was given to Christian's story-telling. The listening clusters of people round him in the great half-dark room inspired him, and it was a great advantage to me, too, to hear the whole ring of their legendary history gone through in so entertaining and illustrative a manner. Christian loved best the telling of animal fables, which were what gave him personally the greatest entertainment, and I will here repeat a few dealing with the raven. Christian always began to laugh if he even saw a raven, and he would often call after him, for instance: "Well, old rogue, what thieving trick have you got in your mind now?" and if the raven croaked, would roar out: "No, you won't get me to dance to your lies!"

### WHEN RAVENS COULD TALK

Once, in olden, very olden days, there was a time when ravens could talk.

But the strange part of the ravens' speech was that with them words had an exactly opposite meaning. When they wanted to say "Thank you," they abused; and, in this way, they always said the opposite of what they meant.

But as this made them full of lies, there was once an old man who conjured their gift of speech from them, and so ravens now can only croak.

But the ravens retained their old nature, and at the present day they are full of irascibility, lies and thievery.

### THE RAVEN AND THE GREAT NORTHERN DIVER

Do you know why the raven is all black, so tiresomely black? It is just because of his impatience. You shall hear.

It was in the days when all the birds were going to receive their colours and the pattern of their feathers. Then the raven

and the Great Northern Diver met and agreed to decorate each other.

The raven began first, and painted the Diver black, with a beautiful white pattern on it.

The Diver, who thought it very pretty, did the same for the other, and painted the raven's coat just exactly like his own.

Then the raven grew angry and declared his pattern ugly ; and the Diver, who was annoyed at the raven's fussiness, daubed him black all over.

So you see that is how the raven came to be all black.

### THE RAVEN AND THE GOOSE

A raven fell in love with a goose and wanted to have her for his wife, but the goose would not consent.

"You are too heavy a flyer," she said ; "you will not be able to follow us when we go across the sea ; there is nowhere that you can rest ; if you grow tired, you will be drowned."

But the raven was obstinate, and very much in love.

"Nothing in the world can tire me," he said loftily. And so it ended in the goose yielding and becoming the raven's wife. When the raven caressed her too tenderly she used to say—

"Do not do that to me. I shall grow too fond of you, and my grief will be so heavy when I come to lose you, during our passage across the great sea."

"Do not be uneasy," said the raven proudly ; "nothing in the world can tire me."

And then he would caress her again.

When the time drew near for the geese to fly away, the goose begged her husband to rest for a few days, that he might be completely fresh when they had to start.

"It is only inactivity that tires me !" said the raven boastfully, and only flew about the more.

Then at last one day the geese set out, and the raven with them. When they came to the very end of the land and were about to cross the great sea, the geese said to the raven—



ELIAS, A WEST GREENLANDER





"Now rest on the promontory there, that you may not be tired when you have to cross the great sea."

And the geese themselves settled down to rest.

"Nothing in the world can tire me," said the raven arrogantly, and flew round and round, up aloft, while the others rested.

Then the geese rose and flew out across the sea. But when they were half-way across, the raven began to be uncertain in his flight; sometimes he beat his wings quite wildly, and was on the point of falling into the sea. But his wings were still strong enough to raise him again.

They were more than half-way, and had not far to go to the land, when the raven began to cry out for help. He was dead tired, and could go no further.

His wife and another goose then swam on the water, and each spread out the wing next to her neighbour—the left for the one and the right for the other—making a bridge on which the raven could rest.

The raven sat down upon it.

But he was tired, and heavy; and when he had sat there a little, he dropped through, not all at once, but quite slowly, little by little: first his feet; then the water came up to his middle; then to his body; then to his neck; and then to his beard. His wife had got him to a piece of new ice, on which he rested his chin, while she, weeping, tried to hold up his head.

But the raven was too heavy: the ice gave way and many bubbles rose up when the raven sank.

And then the widow went, weeping, on her way, alone with the other geese.

When the raven sank, he appeared to a great Angákoq, who was just summoning spirits, and he told his story to him.

He told how he had been married to a goose, and how he had been drowned on his way across the great sea.

Afterwards the Angákoq told this story to others, and that is how we have it.

Of course it is difficult to reproduce Eskimo legends in another language. The means that are resorted to in the

telling of them to evoke laughter and produce effect are so utterly different from those to which we are accustomed, that, in a translation, there is great danger of being crude just where for an Eskimo the point lies.

It must be remembered, too, that what is considered brutally coarse by cultured people does not produce by any means the same impression on the Eskimo, whose natural bluntness and straightforwardness prevent him perceiving what we should call a meanness. And people may talk aloud and unabashed of things which to us are indecent.

Further, the legends are intended to be told, not to be read; and a good story-teller will put so much zest into his narration and his mimicry that it is keen enjoyment merely to watch him.

It has seemed to me advisable, while on this subject, to give some more of Christian's legends, selected indiscriminately, both because, better than any description, they give an impression of the peculiar manner of our entertainment in the church loft,—and because they give such racy expression to the luxuriant imagination of the Eskimos.

Such are the dreams conceived in the cold and the winter darkness; in this way does the brain work up there when, for an evening, men shake off the remembrance of their toiling and moiling, to shorten the nights, which are too long to sleep away.

### THE BOY WHO WENT TO THE LAND OF SPIRITS

There was once a boy whose name was Qalanganguasê; his parents lived close to a place where the strong current kept the water open. One day they ate seaweed and died. Then there was only a sister left to look after Qalanganguasê; but it was not long before she died too, and then there were only strangers to look after him.

Qalanganguasê was quite without strength in his lower limbs—the lower part of his body was dead; and so one day, when the people went out hunting, he was left alone in the



A WEST GREENLANDIC STORY-TELLER



house. He was sitting quite alone when all at once he heard a noise. He grew afraid, and with great difficulty dragged himself out of the house and into another by the side of it; and there he hid himself behind the skin hangings. There he sat, hidden, when he heard a noise again, and a spirit walked in.

“Ah! there are people here!”

The spirit went up to the water bucket and emptied the ladle twice.

“Thanks, that I, who was thirsty, received drink! when one was a dweller on earth, one drank like that,” said the spirit, and went out.

Then the boy heard the villagers come back and assemble outside the house, and they began to crawl in through the passage.

“Qalanganguasê is not here,” they said, when they came in.

“Oh! yes, he is,” said the boy; “I hid myself behind here when a spirit came in. It drank out of the water bucket.”

When the people went to look at the water bucket, it was half full of lice.

Later on it happened again that the people went out seal-catching, and that Qalanganguasê was left behind alone. He sat there quite alone in the house, when all at once the walls and the supports of the house began to shake, and a number of spirits dropped down into the house, one after the other; and the last of them recognised him; it was his sister, who had died not long before.

Then all the spirits began to play about on the floor; they wrestled, they told stories, and laughed like anything.

At first Qalanganguasê was afraid of them, but in the end he found it a very pleasant shortening of the night, and it was only when they heard the villagers coming back that they fled out of the house.

“Take care to tell no tales! Then the lower part of your body will receive strength and nothing shall be impossible to you!” said the spirits, and one by one they fell out of the passage. But Qalanganguasê’s sister could not get out—this was because her brother had been looking after her little

child and had touched it. And the people were close by the entrance passage when at last she fell out, the sister. The people just saw the shadow of two feet.

"Eh! what was that? It was as though I saw the shadow of two feet disappear there," said one.

"Yes; just listen!" said Qalanguangasê, who already began to feel strength coming into him. "This place has been full of people, and they have shortened the whole night for me, and now they say that I shall get well."

Hardly had the boy said this than his strength began slowly to leave his body again, which now lived in the spirit as before.

"Qalanguangasê is going to be challenged to song-duel!" he heard them say, as he lay there. And then they bound the boy fast to the support of the house and let him swing backwards and forwards, while he tried to beat on the drum. After that, the people made themselves ready for a journey and went out to a singing-duel, but the boy was left behind in the house. There he lay, quite alone, when his mother, who had been dead a long time, came in with his father.

"Why are you alone?" they asked.

"I am paralysed," replied the boy; "and when the others went out on a journey to deliver a challenge to a singing-duel, I had to remain behind."

"Journey with us!" said his parents.

"Yes!" said the boy.

And then they took him out and brought him to the country and the house of revenants, and so Qalanguangasê became a revenant himself.

It is said that Qalanguangasê became a woman, when he was changed into a spirit. But his fellow-villagers never found him again.

## THE TWO BROTHERS

There were once two brothers, whose names were Ilimageq and Poulineq. They had a mother and a sister.

Poulineq was a great magician and he had a wife.

One day he began to flense the seals that he had put aside whole for the winter; he was afraid that the hairs might fall off. The mother saw him flensing them, and went up to her daughter and said—

“Fetch me a head; I will boil it.”

The daughter went and told her brother; but he replied—

“No; they are the seals that I have put aside for the winter.”

And the sister told it to her mother.

“Now where is he thinking of going,” said the mother, “seeing that he wants to have a supply of meat ready for us?”

And so she went and cut off a head herself; moreover, it was the biggest that she picked out.

It is related that Poulineq’s wife had turned her affections to an old bachelor. She lived with him when her husband was away on his seal-catching expeditions. When he came paddling home, out at sea, he often saw them go inland together. The bachelor himself had no kayak, but he was stronger than others in the village.

At last it happened that everything was turning more and more towards the winter, and then one fine day it was winter.

One winter evening, in the season when the dark wraps the country closely in, Poulineq went out and called the villagers together.

“I am going to take a soul-flight!” he said.

Then they all came to listen, and Poulineq began to summon his helping-spirits.

All at once he began to rise, flew up in the air, and when he had got so far in his conjurations, he said to his wife—

“Now when I have gone out, you two can be together!” and after these words he flew out through a corner of the window.

He flew inland and went farther and farther, and came in sight of a high mountain, a mountain with a sharp peak. He alighted just on the peak and began spinning round and round, resting on it with one foot. He looked down, and behold! one house engaged all his attention. He stared down at it and



could see that a woman was standing on the floor, flensing. By her side stood one of those who go alone (girls) and waited. He flew off and alighted on the ground.

"Oh! I think I saw sparks just by my side here," said the woman.

"Yes; who can it be?" replied the husband.

And the young woman, who was their daughter, was frightened, but her parents began to call up spirits.

"Tyah! it might be only a dog," said the husband, when he had finished; and the young woman was satisfied again and picked up the blubber to carry it out of the house. When she came out, Poulineq seized her from behind.

"Here he is! It is a man!" screamed the girl.

"Go in and fetch me a pair of trousers," said Poulineq.

When they fly through the air, they are always naked.

"A man without trousers! He is asking for trousers," called the girl.

Then they came out with the father's trousers, which were so big that they came right up to his chest. He drew them on and went in.

And Poulineq took the girl to wife and lived with them.

But while all this was going on the other people in the house at home, and his fellow-villagers, were sitting waiting for him.

At last it was light again. When the day rose over them for the second time, they separated and went away.

Ilimageq fell a-sorrowing when his brother did not return, and it ended with his summoning up his spirits too.

One day he too began to flense the seals he had put aside for the winter, and the same thing happened as before.

Some one came out and asked him for a head.

"It is winter provision!" said he.

The tears came into his sister's eyes and she went in.

"What are you crying for?" asked the mother.

"He says that it is winter provision!"

"That is the answer they generally give before they disappear," said the mother, and she began to weep too.

At last it happened that everything turned more and more towards winter, and then one fine day it was winter.

And it happened that Ilimageq, as his brother had done about the time the dark enwrapped the country, went out and called the villagers together.

"I am going to take a soul-flight!" said he.

The people came in and the lamps were put out. Then he began to rise up, and, like his brother, flew out through a corner of the window. And he followed his brother's trail across country. The brother's way through the air was like a large, distended intestine, which the wind blew through. At last he came in sight of the awl-shaped peak and perched there. He looked down and said—

"I no longer believed that there was any meeting again for us, I, who thought that he was dead!"

And then he let his eyes travel down and he saw his brother sitting undressed in the houses, gnawing a bear's foot. He flew off and alighted just in front of his brother.

"Oh! something was striking sparks just by the side of me!" said the brother's wife.

"Now I will go and hide and you shall find me!" said the husband, who knew that his brother had come. And so he went out and hid himself, and the wife began to look for him. She heard talking from a cleft in the rock, but she saw nothing and went in again.

The two brothers talked for a long time.

"When the spring comes I will visit you!" said Poulineq. "I will bring my wife with me and come by sledge. One day, when a falcon circles above your head, you must come ashore and then I shall come to you!"

Then Ilimageq flew home.

When the spring came, he journeyed out to places where the ice was smooth to catch seals and to wait for the arrival of his brother. There was open water straight in front of the land, but the fjords were still frozen over, and he often peered out after arriving sledges.

One day when he was out in his kayak a falcon began to

circle above him. He said nothing, but turned his kayak round and paddled to land. He paddled, and came to firm ice. There he laid up his boat and walked on.

"One might as well try to take a seal," he said to himself, and went on the ice. He walked in towards land, flung himself at last right down on the ice, and began to look round for his brother.

His attention was attracted by something black up on the glacier. The country was so shaped that between two hills there was a snow-covered glacier, which ran straight down to the ice. The little black dot came nearer, and see! a sledge was driving straight towards him.

It was his brother and his wife. The wife was carrying a little child on her back. The sledge was quite near when he rose. The dogs got scent of him, and he rose and fled across the ice.

When his sister-in-law saw him, she was afraid, and planted her foot so sharply in the ice in front of the sledge that it stopped, and the dogs tumbled backwards.

"Well! but it is my brother, whom we are going to visit," said the husband.

And then the woman's fear subsided.

Then they journeyed on together, and Ilimageq went in front of them, and showed them the way.

"See, Ilimageq is coming with strangers," said people, when they came near to land. And from all the houses people rushed out, and the strangers drove up on land and came into the houses. They were still sitting there when Poulineq's former wife came in.

"There was some dried meat which you should come and eat," said she.

"One has had enough!" said Poulineq.

The morning came, and the evening followed it.

"Then his former wife came again and said—

"The dried meat was waiting for you, I wanted to say!"

"Yes;" and then he rose up and went with her. They came inside the house.

"Sit there!" said the wife, and stroked the place by her side with her hand.

He sat down, and she gave him the dried meat.

He had his wife and his child with him.

Then his former wife pointed to her little thimble-bag ; there was something in it that looked like a piece of turf to light the lamp with. She took this and gave it to the child's mother, saying—

"But won't you give the child something to eat!"

And the mother took it, and the child ate.

And soon after, it so happened that the mother fell down in a faint, and the child died.

The father took the child and cut the body to pieces to find the reason of its death. But he found nothing, and they carried the child's body out.

But after that the mother died also, and again Poulineq took his knife, and he cut her up.

Then came his brother and said—

"Let me look!"

From her throat he took a piece of dried meat and she revived.

When she had come to life again, she was in great haste, now that her child was dead, and she said to her husband—

"Let us go home!"

"Yes," said the husband, and collected his dogs, and people came down to the sledges, as they were about to set out.

But before the man started, he pulled in the dog on the outside right, unharnessed it, and said to it—

"I shall have no other avenger ; go up and kill the cursed pair!"

Like the flashing shadows of the northern lights, all the people dashed through windows and passages, to hide themselves.

The dog was big, and at first it could not get in either through window or passage. At last, however, it forced its way in.

All the people had assembled in one house, and had cast

themselves one on the top of another in terror. But the dog, who would not kill the innocent, turned up his claws, and began to ferret about among the heap of men and women.

Yes ; quite right ! They were at the very bottom !

First the dog bit at her breasts and tore them out ; she did not utter a sound.

Then the dog sprang out and threw up the breasts in front of his master.

“ Did you get them both ? ” asked the man.

The dog only turned his back upon him and flew up to the umiaq on the staging, where the man had hidden himself.

A moment later the dog returned and threw up the man’s vitals before his master. From the bachelor, not a sound was heard.

Then the man harnessed his dogs and drove off.

#### THE CLEFT IN THE ROCK WHICH CLOSED UP <sup>1</sup>

A large hill. In the middle of it a cleft. In the cleft a valley. In the valley a house.

Many children were playing in the cleft, and with them was a woman, with a child on her back. She was the only grown-up person among the children.

Just outside the cleft an old man stood waiting for seals to come up to breathe. The seals swam round and round under the floes, but none of them dared to thrust their noses up to the floe, for they heard the sound of happy voices.

And the old man, who stood outside in the blast, and was cold, he too heard the laughter of the children. At last he grew angry, and turned towards the land crying—

“ Quiet your shouting ! The seals are afraid of you ! ”

But the children played and the children screamed.

And the old man went home.

Next day he again took up his place on the ice, just outside the houses, and he stood there and waited for seals to

<sup>1</sup> Compare page 176, the Polar Eskimo version of the same legend.—G. H.



A WEST GREENLANDIC INTERIOR



come up to breathe. But the children, who were light-hearted and did not think of food, played in the cleft, and again with their cries frightened all the animals away from the floes.

Then the old man grew angry in earnest, and called down to the hill—

“Hill! close over them, playing in there!”

And immediately the sides of the rock drew together, just like a mouth which closes the lips after shouting.

And before the children had time to think a thought, the rock had closed together like a tightly compressed mouth. And the evening came, and the fathers and mothers waited for their children. But the children did not come.

Then they went up to the top of the rock to throw meat down to them, but the opening in the rock was too small and there was no room for meat to pass. Then they went home and fetched bladders full of blood. They poured the blood down through the opening, and it ran down the sides of the rock, and the children licked it up. But the rock took so much; and all that was left on the stones at the top the children did not get; and the blood did not satisfy their hunger, and they wept. But when the weeping was at its loudest, an old woman came running from the beach, where a fresh-caught seal was lying, and in her hand she carried the whole of the seal's intestine, filled with blood. But the end of the intestine she had tied round with thread, and none of the blood ran away before it was untied.

They lowered this down through the hole in the rock, the children undid the end, and the blood flowed into their mouths.

Then the next day came.

“How are you down there?” they called down.

Then they heard a cry, and it came from the woman who had the child on her back—

“The child has begun to suck my neck; soon the bones will come out through the skin and the flesh!”

Then the old man, whose fault it was that the mischance had happened, said—

“Yes; you frightened away my seals, and so it was that



anger grew up in me and gave birth to my vengeance. The rock closed up. But if you will wait, I will open that which is closed to-morrow, with a magic song."

When the people woke up the day after, an old woman came out, and the old man went up to her and said—

"Do you think that the sky will keep blue to-day?"

"Of course! the sun will shine!" replied she.

"Why?" asked the old man again.

Then the old woman looked into the old magician's face, and said quietly, to prick his conscience—

"Of course, because the child must eat into her neck to-day."

But the old man, who was angry at this reply, did not make the pieces of rock part again by his magic, and all the children were starved to death inside.

And so this story must end here.

### THE WOMAN WHO ATE MEN

Now it happened, as usual, that kayaks which went eastwards never came back. At last there was only one of the seal-catchers left, and he too one day paddled eastward, to look for his countrymen. When he came round a promontory a voice called to him—

"Come up!"

"No; I will not come up!"

"Come up, I say!"

And as she was so persistent, he went ashore.

"Carry up your kayak!"

"No; I will not carry it up!"

"Carry it up, I say!"

And as she was so persistent, he carried it up.

"Take the implements out of your kayak!"

"No; I will not take the implements out!"

"Take the implements out of your kayak, I say!"

And as she was so persistent, he took them out.

"Turn your kayak bottom upwards!"

"No ; I will not turn it bottom upwards !"

"Turn your kayak bottom upwards, I say !"

And as she was so persistent, he turned it bottom upwards.

"Put the stone on your kayak !"

"No !"

"Put the stone on your kayak, I say !"

And he did so.

"Now go inside !"

"No !"

"Go inside, I say !"

And so he did.

"Take off your fur-coat !"

"No !"

"Take off your fur-coat, I say !"

And so he did it.

"Take your boots off !"

"No !"

"Take off your boots, I say !"

And so he did.

And she hung them up to dry.

"But what shall one give him to eat ?"

And she began to clean a large, round, wooden platter, and then she went outside to fetch food.

When he looked round her house, he discovered that she had his former companions for pictures in her house, for she had fastened the skins of their faces up to the wall.

The woman came in with a bag of berries. The man began to eat, but when he put his hand down in the bag, he caught hold of a boiled human hand, and when he saw that, he said—

"I can't eat that sort of thing !"

When evening had come, they retired to rest.

The man pretended to sleep, and when he snored a little, he noticed that she took her curved hunting-knife ; but when he seemed to be waking up a little, he heard the clatter of iron. She had flung her weapon away.

But at last the man-eating woman fell asleep. The man

seized hold of his clothes, drew on his kamiks, took his kayak under his arm, and ran down to the beach. He had got into his kayak, and the woman, who came after him, almost touched him ; but she did not quite seize hold of him.

When he got home, he said—

“ No wonder that those who go east never come back again. There is a man-eating woman who lives on them.”

When the next day dawned, he paddled back to her, and when he came below her house, she called out—

“ Come up ! ”

And he replied—

“ But it was you who nearly killed me yesterday.”

“ Yes ; but come up all the same. It was not I, but she up there who nearly murdered you.”

“ Yes ; but the child in the bag on your back has dangerous nails,” called out the man in the kayak to her.

She turned round, grew frightened, and threw it from her, and when it touched the water it sank, in pieces, to the bottom. Its eyebrows became blue mussels, its intestines seaweed, its hair sea-plants. Then the hag grew angry and blurted out—

“ If one could only stab him down there ! ”

The kayak very nearly capsized ; but he called back—

“ If one could send his harpoon through her up there ! ”

The woman almost fell down.

“ If one could but stab him ! ” she called again.

And he almost capsized.

“ If only, without being cautious, one might drive his harpoon right through her ! ” he called back.

She fell on her knees and called out, as she flung her curved knife—

“ If only one could hit him down there ! ”

The man had his whole kayak under water, so near was he to capsizing. But he only paddled away from her and went home.

And I will end this story here.



ANTON, FROM GODTHAABSFJORD



## THE PTARMIGAN AND THE LONG-TAILED DUCK

There was once a long-tailed duck, swimming eastward close to the shore. And he looked up at the cliffs and caught sight of a ptarmigan, circling above his head. It was as though he wanted to attract all the attention.

So the long-tailed duck called to him—

“What on earth are you doing up there above me?”

And the ptarmigan replied from far above the cliffs—

“Oh, it is only my care for you that makes me circle above you.”

“But why must you be always up above me, you up there with the red breeches?”

The ptarmigan bent towards the long-tailed duck and called down—

“Yes; and why have you, with the red skin-laps, such long rectrices?”

“Yes; but why must you circle above me all the time, you, who never venture upon the water?” called the long-tailed duck.

“But what reason have you always to be scolding me, you, who cannot compare yourself with me?” replied the ptarmigan.

Then the long-tailed duck turned to it and said—

“How dare you call to me, you up there, with your clumsy beak?”

“And you, shouting down there with your miserable thin beak!”

And they began to abuse each other in earnest.

“Ah yes, keep on shouting up there, you with your split feet.”

“You with your great flat dishes.”

“Now you rouse my anger!” cried the long-tailed duck, and went ashore, ran up to the ptarmigan, and seized hold of it.

“Ow! loose me!” cried the ptarmigan.

“No, never!” replied the long-tailed duck. And then it dragged the ptarmigan down to the sea.

"Alas! and this is I," said the ptarmigan, "who have never before been near the sea, after the ice breaks away in the summer-time."

The ptarmigan had grown so amenable.

"Yes; now you can begin to squall, now it is time to call out!" cried the long-tailed duck, who had seized the ptarmigan by the wing.

But the ptarmigan was so sore afraid that it lost its nerve even when it got a foothold on the ledges of rock.

"Alas! and this is really I, who am so afraid of the sea in the summer," cried the ptarmigan.

Splash! and then you saw a few bubbles. They disappeared and did not come up again, and the sun went on its way, and it went past the time when the bladder-noses draw in their breath and dive down to find something to eat.

But see! all at once the long-tailed duck rose to the surface of the water, and its white breast was uppermost.

It was dead—but what had become of the other?

Up near the land, the water began to bubble, and out of the sea the ptarmigan shot up, with a sea-perch in its mouth.

"Qaqe-qa-qaq!" ("It was all one could do to come up again!")

And when it saw the long-tailed duck floating dead on the water, it called—

"Yes; now you can taunt me; it is only now that I begin to feel angry."

And then it ran ashore and disappeared in the hills.

And since then it has never tried to look out over the sea.

Here ends this story.

## THE INSECTS THAT WANTED TO MARRY

### THE BACHELOR

There was once a bachelor.

That is how one generally begins a story.

He always used to run down to the young girls, when he

saw them playing outside. And the young girls always ran away from him and fled into the houses.

When the big game catching season was come, and the kayak-men hunted enough and to spare, he always overslept himself frightfully, whenever he wanted to go out. It was only when the sun had disappeared beneath the horizon, and the hunters were towing their kill to land, that he used to wake.

One day when as usual he had only awakened at sunset, he slunk into his kayak and paddled off. He was hardly out of sight of the houses when he heard a man call out—

“Help me ; I am upset.”

He paddled up to him and put his kayak right side up, then saw that he was one of the noseless people, the fire people.

“You shall have all my thongs with walrus-tusk fittings,” said the capsized one.

“No ; I ought not to take those things. The only thing I cannot get the better of, is my distressing drowsiness,” he replied.

“You must first follow me to my country,” said the fire man, and so they went together.

When they arrived, the noseless one said—

“The man who saved my life when I was on the point of death.”

“Yes ! I saved you because my course crossed yours ; but indeed it was the first time for long enough that I had been in my kayak,” said the bachelor.

“You must choose one animal when you go home. And take care not to speak of what you have seen and heard. If you do, you will be unlucky with your catch.”

These were the words of the fire man. And then the bachelor went home.

But when the time for returning arrived and no one had seen him, the unmarried girls had already begun to rejoice that he was lost. He was such a bad man, they thought.

But when he suddenly came in sight round the point of the promontory, they all called out—

“That looks exactly like the bachelor !”



And then all the *kisimituatsait* (those who are so fortunate as to be single: the girls) ran into the houses.

"And the bachelor has brought a catch home!" cried out one.

It was hardly evening before the bachelor went to bed; the light had barely dawned before the bachelor went out hunting, long before his fellow-villagers. The sun had hardly begun to rise in the sky before the bachelor came home with three seals. And the others were only on the point of starting out.

Thus the bachelor's days now fled away. Early in the morning he went out, and when the sun was only just beginning to mount the heavens he came home with animals.

Then the unmarried girls began to talk together.

"But what is coming to the bachelor?" they said, and then they vied with each other for his favour.

"Let me! let me!" they all cried together.

And the bachelor turned to them and, laughing, chose the best of the lot.

Then they lived together, the bachelor and the girl, and every day she flensed fresh-caught seals. At last she grew tired and began to cry out—

"But why do you catch so desperately much?"

"Ah-h! the seals offer themselves, and so I catch them," replied the bachelor.

But as his wife kept on asking him, he said to her—

"Yes, once . . ." and when so much had escaped him, he went to lie down. But it was a long time before he fell asleep, and it was only when the sun was just over the houses of the village, that he awoke and paddled out.

That day he only caught one seal.

In the evening his wife began questioning him again, and as nothing would make her keep quiet, he told her—

"Once, yes . . . I waked late in the evening and paddled out, and I heard a man calling for help. 'I am upset,' he cried, and so I went up to him and righted his kayak, and when I came to look, he was one of the noseless ones.

"'It was a good thing that you were not idling about among the houses,' said the noseless one to me.



MARKUS : WEST GREENLANDIC TYPE



“‘Well, I had only just crawled into my kayak,’ said I.”

And he went on to tell her all that had happened, and from that day forth his skill in catching seals left him, for his distressing drowsiness took from him, as it had done before, all chance of hunting.

At last he had no more skins to give his wife for clothes, and then she ran away from him. He went after her, but the wife escaped into a fissure in the hillside which the man could not squeeze through.

The bachelor lay in wait, and heard whispering inside the hollow—

“Go out to him.”

And then a bluebottle came out and said—

“Take me.”

“I will not have you,” said the bachelor; “you suck your nourishment from dung.”

Then the bluebottle laughed and crawled inside the hole, and the man heard it say—

“He will not have me because I suck nourishment from dung.”

And then the whispering inside the hole began again.

“You go out now.”

And then a fly came out.

“You can have me,” she said.

“No, I don’t want you,” said the man, “because you lay eggs just anyhow. I will not have you; your eyes are so wretchedly big.”

Then the fly laughed and went in with the same answer.

Again there was a whispering inside, and then a daddy-long-legs came out.

“Take me,” said the daddy-long-legs.

“No; you have such long legs,” said the bachelor, and the daddy-long-legs went in laughing.

Then the centipede came out.

“Take me,” said the centipede.

“No; I will not have you,” said the bachelor; “you have too many legs. Your body almost touches the ground with all your legs, and your eyes are horrid.”

And the centipede guffawed at him and went in.

They whispered together again, and then the gnat came out.

"Take me," said the gnat.

"You bite," said the man, and the gnat went in, laughing.

Then at last the wife begged him to go in to her, as he would have none of all the others, and with very great difficulty he squeezed himself in through the chink in the rock and took her for his wife again.

And the bachelor was happy.

And his wife began to caress him, and said over him—

"Do not wake till the petrel begins to scream. Sleep till the sound of the young birds is heard."

And the bachelor fell asleep.

When he awoke he was lying quite alone. The earth was blue, for it was summer, and the petrel was calling on the bird rock. It had been winter when he crept inside the hole in the hillside.

When he went down to his kayak the skin had parted with age.

Yes, and then, as he used to be, he was reduced to meagre fare.

#### THE BACHELOR WHO MARRIED A FOX

It is the old story about a bachelor again. His countrymen urged him to marry, but he would not.

One day he set a fox-trap. When he looked at it he had caught a fox, and he killed it.

The next time he went to look at his trap there was something in it again, this time a she-fox.

He took her home with him and kept her, like a dog, under the window. When he had a meal he gave the fox the bones, and then she lay there and gnawed them.

That was how things were between him and the fox; and then one morning he went out seal-hunting, in his kayak.

It was not very long before he used to find that the skins of the seals that he caught were dressed when he got home; yes, and at last they were even spread out to dry on the staging outside.

By-and-by he noticed that his lamp was also attended to, while he was away, and never went out. When he came home, he found the pot boiling over the lamp fire, without any person being in the room.

As he could not understand the meaning of these things, he hid himself one day behind a rock to watch, and behold! a lovely woman with a great knot of hair and broad hips. It was the fox, who could change into a woman.

When she went inside, the bachelor sprang in after her. Inside the house, he saw something dark disappear under the window. The pot was turned, but there was not a person in sight.

The next day he hid himself again, and again there came out of the house a woman with a lovely big knot of hair. When she went back in, he ran after her and caught hold of her before she got under the window. And then he made her his wife.

She was so beautiful that she was like the white men's women.

While he was living with her as his wife, one day there came a man on a visit.

"Shall not we two change wives?" asked the stranger one day, when they were out in their kayaks.

"Impossible! she gets so easily jealous."

And the stranger had to go away without getting his will.

The bachelor had not wished to lend his wife because there was this peculiarity about her, that she smelt of fox, when she perspired.

But one day the stranger came again on a visit, and again proposed an exchange of wives; and as the bachelor did not see any way out of the difficulty, at last he consented.

So one day he went in his kayak, over to the wife of the stranger; but before he started, he begged him not on any account to make remarks, if by any chance his wife should happen to smell of fox. She was so hot-tempered!

The stranger then lay down by her side, and it was not long before the woman began to perspire; and she, who was more beautiful than other women, began to smell of fox.

The man tried hard to restrain himself from saying anything, but the smell grew stronger and stronger, and at last he burst out—

“But where on earth does this stink of a fox come from?”

Then he caught the scream of a fox: “Ka, ka, ka, ka!”

The woman had sprung up from the couch and dashed out. The man rushed after her. But he only saw a fox spring up the cliff.

Then he went home and told the man that his wife had run away.

“Did I not tell you that she was very hot-tempered, and that you must say nothing, if she should smell?” said the man, who was very angry.

Then he looked for the fox, and called to her to come back; but the fox never came. They say that he is still wandering about the hills, calling her.

As will be readily understood, Christian did not care to speak of his notorious achievements of East coast days; when I hinted at the murders he had committed, he shook his head and said—

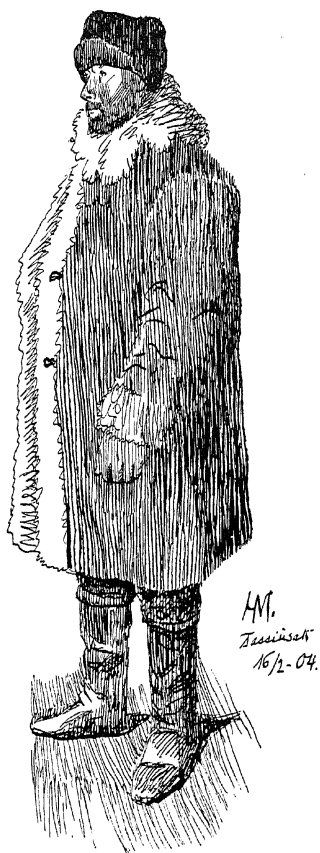
“Yes; the people I killed deserved the death they died, for they were dangerous to the rest of us. I did not kill them from desire to murder, but from a sense of duty towards my fellow-villagers.”

This was what Christian said to me; but I always had an idea, from the expression of his face, that he was trying to conceal something he did not wish to own. Later, too, I heard that in an access of remorse, he had been to his priest and confessed.

The only occurrence from the East coast that he always spoke of with great delight and a certain pride was his challenge to the old magician, Kunigsarfik.

When he was in a really good humour he used to sing his challenging songs, insulting the old man.

Insult-songs were the means the East coast Eskimos used to settle up all their differences. When two men had cause of



FULL-LENGTH SKETCH OF UNDERASSISTENT  
SÖREN NIELSEN





enmity against each other, it was their mode of duel. All the grown-up people of the place were called together into one large house, and, in the presence of all those whose opinion was respected, each then attempted in song to lay bare his opponent's sore points.

The injured man was, of course, always the challenger, and had the first right to speak. Before he began to sing at his opponent, he bound him carefully with tight bonds to the support of the house, and there he had to stand the whole evening, exposed to the mockery of the singer and the onlookers. His opponent was permitted to make use of every imaginable means of exciting him to anger; he was allowed to spit in his face, to fill his mouth with bits of blubber, till he could not draw his breath; and, while flinging at him the most virulent abuse he could think of, was supposed to jump at him and, with his forehead, strike him frightful "skull-breakers," wherever on his face he liked. These blows did not cease till the opponent's face was so swollen that "the cheeks were on a level with the forehead, and the eyes were closed."

And while this was going on, the bound man must not, by word or look, betray that the singer's scorn or ill-treatment made the slightest impression on him; on the contrary, a superior smile must play upon his lips, and his face must express compassion for his opponent's unsuccessful attempts to excite him and make him give himself away.

His day came when the wounds on his face were well. Then he could take his revenge.

It was only specially strong and courageous men who could challenge each other to an insult-duel of this description, which naturally demanded not only strength but unusual self-control. During the interval before a duel men used to harden their foreheads as follows:—The skull of a bearded seal would be bound fast to the post of the house, and the man would practise running his head against it, until the skin of his forehead was so hard that it no longer hurt him to do so. There were some who attained such dexterity that they could split the skull of a seal, Christian declared.

## THE LEGEND OF A SOUL-STEALER

I AM going to tell you about Ilisimartoq, the greatest murderer I ever knew. How many souls he stole I do not know, but the number of them was great.

He came from down Angmagssalik way, but went north to trade on the West coast; then he stopped at Igdlularssuit, where at that time there were many people. He arrived late in the year, and so things just fitted in that he wintered there.

All through the winter he behaved well. Then came the summer, and still he did not go north to trade. It seemed as though he had given up his trading-journey. The following winter it was that the lust of murder came upon him.

Two young men were out seal-hunting in kayaks, Quperneq and Ukugssulik. One of them, the youngest, was a slender-limbed young fellow; but the elder brother was strong and dangerous to fall out with.

These two brothers met Ilisimartoq on their way home. Quperneq had caught two bearded seals. Then it was that Ilisimartoq crept up behind Quperneq, who did not see him till he had already lifted his harpoon. He knew then that he was nearer death than life, for it was too late to offer any resistance, and so he just turned sideways and awaited the dart.

His kayak overturned the moment that it touched him, and the arrow pierced from his eye right into the brain.

His younger brother, who attempted to escape, the murderer contented himself with hitting on the head, so that he upset.

Then Ilisimartoq took Quperneq's catch and his head-dress and went home.

On his arrival he said nothing of the murder, for he would have made himself avowed enemies in the families of the

dead men. But when the two brothers failed to return, every one knew, all the same, that Ilisimartoq had killed them ; nor did he make any secret of it ; it was only that he did not say so straight out.

When a man is meditating murder, he always puts a new iron point to his arrow or harpoon ; there are those who have quite special points for human beings.

So when Ilisimartoq one day put a new point on his harpoon, all knew that he was planning murder again, and so they kept a careful watch upon him.

His brother-in-law, Igsiavik (The Chair), who was annoyed with him because he was preparing them fresh enemies, decided to anticipate him.

One day the hunters paddled out together in kayaks, five altogether ; amongst them were Ilisimartoq and his two brothers-in-law, Igsiavik and Isângassoq ; they had arranged beforehand that that day Ilisimartoq should be killed.

On one of the outermost islands Ilisimartoq went ashore to whet his harpoon point, and then the others knew that they had to be careful. But, to seem as if nothing were the matter, they began to sing drum-songs as they sat in their kayaks.

Ilisimartoq was a great magician. They had not let him suspect anything from their behaviour, but none the less he became suspicious and uneasy, looked about him as he whetted his harpoon point, and at last got up suddenly and paddled away without saying a word.

So he was just going to escape them without their having had an opportunity of murdering him. Then it was that one of the kayak-men went to the place where Ilisimartoq had been whetting his harpoon point and began to conjure him back again. Ilisimartoq had already gone a long way, when he began to conjure ; but so great a power had the magic song over him that he turned round quite calmly and unsuspectingly, just as he had been adjured to do in the formula ; then he went ashore and began to whet his harpoon point again.

Then Igsiavik crept up behind him. Ilisimartoq was leaning

forward and rubbing away at the iron point, and before a suspicion had crossed his mind his brother-in-law shot him from behind, and the bullet went in through his shoulder and out through his head.

Then the four others rushed forward and seized Ilisimartoq ; but so strong was he in his death struggle that they were all flung off and he was able to get time to draw his hand down over the bullet wound and heal it.

Ilisimartoq was a powerful magician ; great was his might, and he had much evil in him, and as he had always willed the evil the evil helped him (the recently converted Nukarajua's reasoning).

The others, however, flung themselves upon him again immediately, as soon as they had collected their wits after the fright, and one of them rubbed blubber over the wound.

As the blubber prevented Ilisimartoq healing the wound by magic, they soon prevailed against him. Two held him by the arms and a third thrust an arrow up his body and worked it about.

Then Ilisimartoq gave in, little by little ; he writhed in agony, curled himself up, twitched convulsively, and at last lay stiff and motionless, with his fists clenched in death.

And so no one had any further reason to fear death from Ilisimartoq. Isângassoq then began to weep, for it dawned upon him all at once that he had helped to murder his brother-in-law. He thought of his sister, and he felt much pity for her, now that they had killed her husband and provider ; and he broke into loud lamentations over Ilisimartoq and wept for his death. But Igsiavik, his brother, went to him and said—"We will kill you too, if you do not stop at once with your stupid lamentations."

So Isângassoq held his peace, for Igsiavik was his elder brother. Then they dismembered the murdered man at every joint, to prevent the soul revenging itself. The head they put into a hunting-buoy, dragged it up to a glacier, and dropped it down a deep crevasse ; for so mighty was Ilisimartoq that they

were afraid of him, even after his body had been cut to pieces.

And it is said that many who passed afterwards heard cries from below, so great was his power, and that was why they had been afraid to let him live.

*Told by NUKARAJUA, who migrated to the West coast about fifteen years ago, to be baptized, with her family.*

## THE INVULNERABLE UASE

I WAS sitting in my tent one evening, heartily tired of legends, sick of superstition, and was thinking to take a little rest, when there arrived an invitation from old Susanne. I went.

They gave me boiled cod that had been kept till it was rotten, and ancient train-oil, liquid from age, as a sauce to dip it in. Rotten meat I like, but rotten fish I have never been able to get used to. The meal was, to me, most repugnant. And in addition to that the house was unpardonably filthy.

Old Susanne moved about clad only in her chemise, which was in rags and very black. Where the chemise failed to cover her, the office was performed by absolute dirt. As I sat eating the rotten fish, which was spread out on an unappetising floor, the horrible filth of which is indescribable, and conversed with my lively hostess, it did seem to me for a moment, perhaps because I was over-tired, that work among primitive peoples is not all pleasure. You have to live *with* those whom you wish to describe. If they are swine, you must live with them in their swinery. During the restricted stay that one makes while travelling, there is no time to introduce reform. If you began to upbraid them with their way of living, they would be offended at once and draw back, and you would have no opportunity of regaining their goodwill.

Despite all, however, Susanne was a capital story-teller, so that I was willing to go through much to keep on good terms with her. She was intending to tell me something that had happened at Igdlukasik. And when I had disposed of my rotten cod, she slapped me on the back and expressed her delight at my having contented myself with her simple fare. And then she began at once to narrate.

One of the stories she told me (though not the one related that evening) was the story of

## THE INVULNERABLE UASE

Old Susanne is about sixty years of age, and emigrated to Igdlukasik, on the West coast, about twenty years ago, where she received her present name in baptism in place of her former one, Qingajâq.

She is the sister of Pinertoq (in baptism named Noah) and Pangagkarwik, now Hedvig; the latter are now living at Qernertoq, east of Cape Farewell. There were originally seven brothers and sisters; the others are dead. Their mother, Qujâq, was from Tingmiarmiut; their father, Ingersia, from Inugssuarimiut, north of Umanaq, on the East coast.

Old Ingersia was thinking at that time of going down to the West coast to be baptized, but his sons dissuaded him. They said—

“You will not be able to stand baptism; things will only go ill with you. The ingnerssuit (the people without noses, who live in a country which is supposed to lie between the sea and the earth; you enter it by going into the sea at the coast) have told us that when He whom the baptized ones call Jesus shows Himself at the end of the world (they had heard of the end of the world on their journeys to the West coast) to judge baptized and heathen, then the timersit (great inland-dwellers) and the ingnerssuit and the akilinerimiut (people who live on the other side of the great sea, and who, like the inland-dwellers, are said to be very big) will engage in conflict with this Jesus, and kill Him; and then the baptized will be abandoned in crevasses and at the bottom of precipices, while the heathen will make their way up to heaven.”

So the father decided not to be baptized.

Qingajâq described her father as a giant; he had developed his strength to the utmost because in his youth he had been threatened by certain enemies, and the rest of his life he had had to be on his guard against sudden attacks.



Her father's elder sister lived through an uninterrupted winter two years long (*ukiut mardluk nipitartut*), when the people were driven by hunger to eating one another.

Ah, it was of Uase that I was going to tell you; I knew him and lived in his house for three winters. He was a very great magician, and they could not vanquish him the time that they tried to kill him. His son, Ukugssulik, I knew him too; he was quite small when they sought his father's life. I met him too after he grew up; he was little of body but strong, amusing and entertaining to be with. He was quite young then, but he had an old man's cleverness and understanding already. His one eye was closed, so that he always looked as if he were laughing on the one side of his face. Ah yes! how well I remember Ukugssulik! He was treacherously murdered later from a kayak, together with his brother, by Ilisimartoq, Sanimuinaq's younger brother. But what I am going to tell you about now happened when Ukugssulik was quite small.

Uase had once said in jest that he was going to take Kags-sanip's young daughter for his second wife, although she was really intended for an unmarried young man.

Uase was without brothers and without relatives, and that meant without avengers. Therefore there was no risk in murdering him; and so three men thought they would do it, they pretending to be indignant at Uase's wishing to deprive a young man of the woman he was to have married. They knew quite well, for that matter, that the whole thing had been said in jest; but people had to be careful of their words in those days.

The names of the three men were Qaratsuk, Angiamineq, and Sorqiaq; they had no quarrel at all with Uase, as far as that went, but were simply envious of his great strength. All these men were from down Angmagssalik way, and were on a trading-journey south. Uase had for the time settled at Qingataq, near Umitvik.

One day that he was out in his kayak alone, they waylaid him at Perserajuk. They gave out that they were on a long hunting expedition and had plenty of food with them, and they



OLD OLE : WEST GREENLANDIC TYPE



invited him to a meal. Uase ate heartily, but noticed that they did not seem hungry; still this did not rouse his suspicions. After the meal, when Uase was satisfied with eating, and heavy, the others suddenly said they would run a race up Perserajuk Hill.

Uase was by no means inclined to run then, but would not refuse, and so off they went up the hill. But Uase was at the top long before the others, and then amused himself by watching them toil up.

"Yes; that is just how he is, and I do not feel quite comfortable when I look at him with thoughts of murder," said Angiamineq to the two others. He had not originally had any desire to kill Uase, but the others had partly compelled, partly paid him to join them.

So they went down the hill again and to their kayaks. But just as Uase was about to get into his kayak, and was standing with one leg in the kayak and the other on land, one of the others called out—

"A seal! a seal just outside!"

Then, as he looked out to seaward, he received a stab in the one shoulder that pushed him into the water, and before he had time to collect his wits a lance was thrust through his shoulder-blade with such force that the point came out between his breast-bones.

Uase turned giddy and he saw sparks; for a moment he was so confused that at first he began to pull at the point, which only drove the lance further into his body. But with a jerk Angiamineq wrenched it out again and then aimed it at his shoulder so violently that there was a crack as the point pierced the shoulder-blade.

It seemed, related Uase afterwards, as though for the first time in his life he understood what pain meant. It hurt him so much that he saw fire before his eyes. But he was a powerful magician, you see; and when he had collected his wits sufficiently to be able to stroke the wounds with the palm of his hand, they were healed; only the one in his back he could not reach.

It was chiefly Angiamineq who gave the thrusts. Qaratsuk

helped too, and next time Uase was stabbed just in the pit of the stomach. He was on the point of dropping, but healed it by drawing his hand over it.

A stab in the stomach very nearly killed him, for the blow was aimed with such force that his bowels fell out by the side of him as the lining of the stomach was torn up. All the blubber he had eaten shortly before ran out and made the sea quite smooth; and blubber prevents a magician healing his wounds, and so Uase was not able to cure this last one.

To gain time, he began to spurt water up in Angiamineq's face, and he involuntarily retreated a few paces, so that Uase was able to get a foothold on land, and then it was Angiamineq's turn to be cast into the sea. But the sudden movement that Uase was obliged to make made the blood gush out from the wound in his body, and all the food he had just eaten fell out on the rock with a splash.

Uase, who was then unable to help himself further, as he could not move, saved himself by a lie.

"Hej—help! Come here, you kayak over there!" he roared out. "Qaratsuk and his companions are murdering me!"

Qaratsuk, who really believed a kayak was in sight, crouched down, so as not to be seen, crept towards his kayak, took Angiamineq, who was still in the water, in tow, and paddled with all his might out to a little island. Sorqiaq made for the hills and hid himself.

Shortly afterwards there really did pass two kayaks, and Uase called to them. A piece of a half-skin<sup>1</sup> was plastered over the wound in the stomach, after the bowels had been replaced, and a watertight whole-skin<sup>2</sup> was placed tightly down over his body, covering all the wounds; and then they towed him home.

It was the custom on the East coast to keep a binding on

<sup>1</sup> A half-skin is an article of clothing used by kayak rowers. It is a circular piece of skin (watertight), and is fastened round the opening of the kayak, after which it is lashed under the man's arms.

<sup>2</sup> A whole-skin is a garment, made of watertight sealskin, a sort of shirt with hood, framing the face. The sleeves can be laced tightly together, and it fits closely round the wrists, the water not being able to penetrate anywhere. It is worn in the kayak.



GABRIEL



for five days ; but even before Uase had his whole-skin off, he earnt that his three enemies had fled south to a trading-place on the West coast.

The wound in his stomach was a long time in healing. When he was taken outside his tent, he had to remain seated, without moving ; he could not even move his arms. He was like a great stone, and the birds came and perched upon his head without his being able to lift his arms and drive them away.

He suffered greatly for a long time, but at last he recovered completely. The men who had tried to murder him, however, were themselves to have a shorter life for their deed ; it is said that Uase conjured destruction upon them by magic songs.

There were four umiaqs together, all from Angmagssalik, on a trading-journey south. We were on a trading-journey too, and also going south just then, but we were all from the south district. When we came to Itivdleg, on our way home, we met the "north-dwellers" on their way to Pamiagdlok. That year there was a great deal of sickness on the West coast, and the East Greenlandic boat-crews were smitten. On that journey I lost my father, two married brothers, and two married sisters.

Ah ! yes, once I used to cry whenever I thought of that journey ; but now it is a long time ago, and one speaks of it as though it were a legend, that had nothing to do with oneself.

Of our four umiaqs, only three returned, with crews so attenuated that at last there were hardly any to row the boats. The crew of the fourth boat had all died, except my sister, who was left a widow, and a half-grown brother and sister. They were almost starved to death, when they chanced to meet Nakuaq, Quania's father, who took them in.

Illness killed the people ; illnesses which we never knew till we began to frequent the trading-places. Not even the illness from cold, which followed from a stay in West Greenland, had we known before ; and the scurvy which all those who have travelled round the south ("Uvijarnerit") are so tormented with, was quite unheard of.



The plague that time laid itself heavily on the boats from Angmagssalik. Of the four umiaqs, only one returned, and it was that of Qaratsuk, one of Uase's enemies.

But the Angmagssalik men behaved without pity towards those who had lost their parents or near relatives. Both the half-grown and the children were left behind on the desolate coast, because they did not want the trouble of looking after them. They were flung ashore, when they tried to get in with the rest, and thus there were regular battles every time that a camping-place was abandoned. Those who had been pointed out by the leaders to be left behind, threw themselves upon the umiaqs, when they pushed off. But the crews struck them with their oars, till, stunned by the blows, they fell backwards and were left to perish with hunger unless, before that happened, they drowned themselves.

The year after these occurrences I came to live with Nakuaq, who was also called Agssaqange, because he had neither fingers nor toes; this was at Umîvik, and Uase was in the same tent too.

While we were still at Umîvik, Qaratsuk passed by on his way north. Uase grew pale and silent when his old enemy put ashore. Qaratsuk became grave too, for he thought that now Uase would revenge himself. But Nakuaq, who was anxious to prevent killing, went about the tent, which was full of exuberantly gay and high-spirited guests, to put people in a good temper and distract their thoughts from revenge. He positively petted those who were inside.

"Why are you so silent, Uase? See, the tent is full of guests; let us cheer the guests with our talk," said he to Uase.

Uase did not reply, did not look up; he was fighting a terrible battle with himself. He sweated with rage. The sweat poured down on the floor from his chin and his hair steamed. In spite of all Nakuaq's laughing and talking he could not get a word out. We others sat devoured with curiosity, for we felt quite sure that we should be witnesses of the fight; if only Nakuaq's exuberant good temper did not frustrate it!

But Qaratsuk sat shaking with fear.

Then Nakuaq suddenly turned to Uase and said right out—

“Uase, you are not thinking of revenging yourself on our guest?”

We all looked at Uase. The sweat was dripping from his chin and steam rose from his hair.

At last, for the first time, Uase looked up, and fixing his eyes on Qaratsuk, who sat crouched together to almost nothing, he said—

“From a man without relations surely none need fear revenge.”

And, to taunt Qaratsuk, who had not been able to murder him, even with the help of two others, he went on—

“And besides, no one kills without first having tested the strength of his enemy!” (“Kisermagama toqutsinavian-gilanga; kisiat inoqativta nukinga misiligsimalerângavtingo, toqúniartarparput.”)

And then he left the tent.

When he came in again a little later, anger had left him. The humiliation of his enemy had soothed him, and the rest of the evening he talked and jested as though he had never so much as thought of murder; but it had been Uase’s firm intention, if he ever met his mortal enemy again, to kill him. It was only Nakuaq’s stupid foolery that had induced him to give it up.

And often since then I have felt angry with kind old Nakuaq, for it was simply and solely his fault that I did not happen to be present at the murder of Qaratsuk.

And we were all very vexed about it.

It was up in the church loft at Igdlukasik that old Susanne delivered herself of this story. In addition to herself, there were sitting there Rosine, Sabine and Bathsheba, all old women, and all former coast dwellers and heathen; but they had all now, in the baptismal pact, received the promise of eternal life.

At Susanne’s story the old heathendom blazed up in them

afresh, and an untamed, rapacious expression came into their wrinkled faces, as their fancy began to play.

"Yes, yes; what a pity that the killing came to nothing!" said Rosine.

"Yes; only think, you might have told us about it," sighed Sabine.

"Yes; then I should have had a really good tale to tell," concluded old Susanne.

These wrinkled, blear-eyed old crones—they were greedy vultures after all, thirsting to batten on dead bodies.



## THE MAN WHO WAS TOO FOND OF HIS WIFE

OLD Sabine narrates.

At Itivdlerssuaq, north of Umanaq, there lived once, many years ago, a man who, because he was jealous, watched very closely over his wife. He could not bear for the woman to go out when he himself was not with her, and so when he went out hunting, he used to hide her footwear.

But when, in spite of it all, he had a suspicion that she had been unfaithful to him, he would take his knife and stab her in the legs. This was not so very painful, said the woman ; but when he took the two valves of a mussel-shell and pinched pieces of flesh from her legs, then she could not help shrieking with the pain.

As the woman could not stand her husband's ill-treatment, she ran away one day to the hills, when he was out in his kayak. From the cliff she looked out to sea, and called to the mighty white men to help her.

Immediately a great iceberg became visible out at sea and drifted in towards land. When it came nearer it proved to be one of the white men's ships. And then the woman took refuge in it.

When the man came home his wife had disappeared, and he was seized with violent grief, for he was very fond of his wife, who was beautiful, and had a fair, pink body.

He began to look for her, and soon learnt that the white men had come and stolen her from him.

He rowed straight out to the ship, but the sailors had taken away the gangway and all the ropes that hung down. He rowed round the ship in fury, but found everywhere only a steep wall which he could not climb. At last, under the bow-

sprit, he saw an end of rope that they had forgotten to take away; he seized hold of it and began to swarm up it, hauling himself up by his arms only, and remaining seated in his kayak. But as soon as the sailors saw this, they cut the rope, so that he fell back into the sea.

When he had rowed vainly a few times round the ship he went home and grieved very much over the loss of his beautiful wife.

The next day he heard that the white men had put her on the summit of a high and solitary fjeld near Itivdlerssuaq, and that his wife was then standing there! He went, but could not climb up. From below, he vainly implored his wife to come down. She only replied—

“See now, if you had been content with thrusting your knife in my legs, I would never have left you; it was only when you began to pinch my flesh with mussel-shells that I ran away.”

And, as she refused to come down to him, he, who before could not bear for his wife to leave him even for a minute, was quite beside himself with grief at her loss.

When the man came again the next day, the wife had dug herself a hole in the ground. She had hollowed the cave out in such a way that it went through the earth like a subterranean passage.

I have seen this cave myself; when you stood at the southern entrance to it and threw a stone inside, you heard the splash of the stone falling into the sea—if you threw one in from the northern end, you heard it fall on land.

Far in this hole the woman hid herself, so that the man could not find her. He tried to crawl inside, armed with a lamp well supplied with wicks and blubber, but when he had gone a little way the lamp went out. So that day too he was obliged to give up the idea of finding his wife.

The next day the white men came to the husband and said to him—

“See here, if it is really true that you are so fond of your wife, you will be willing to dare a venturesome thing that will

give her back to you! Look, we have suspended a rope between the two peaks; you must swarm along it with bent arms. If you can do that, we will give you back your wife."

Up by Iterdlagssuaq there were two very high peaks. The line was suspended between these two. There was a very large lake below; if the man grew tired half-way and loosed his grip of the rope, he would drown in the lake.

When the white men had taken the husband up to the rope, one of them laid out across the rope to show him what he was to do.

"That was splendid! But if a white man can do it, so can I," thought the man.

At one end of the line he saw an axe, and he threw that into the lake, for he was afraid that they might cut the rope after he was well started.

Then he climbed out along the rope and found it easy, for he was very strong; but it was a long way from the one peak to the other.

When he had gone half-way, the white men suddenly began to swing the rope; the man, who almost missed his hold, then swung his legs too round the rope and held fast in that way, although by degrees it made his head swim.

The white men, who could see that he was holding tight, then began to swing the rope very violently. The man still hung out, midway between two peaks; and it was only when the rope began to cut deep into his armholes and make all his muscles slacken, that he lost his hold and plunged headlong into the lake.

This was how the white men killed the husband who was so fond of his wife that he could not even bear for her to leave his house; and afterwards they married his wife.

All the mixed races on the East coast are descended from this woman; and the white men's stay there is the reason why all the people at Anoritôq speak such a strange dialect.

## A STORY OF THE GREAT FAMINE

ROSINE, an old woman from Igdlukasik, north-west of Cape Farewell, told me the following story which she had heard from her mother, when she was living on the East coast.

Once, many years ago, it came to pass on the East coast that two winters followed upon one another without any spring, summer, and autumn coming in between. People had no chance of getting in provisions, and a terrible famine broke out, and many of the settlements died out altogether.

In the autumn, before, in an ordinary way, the sea ought to have frozen over, it could be seen that something unusual was going to happen, for huge blocks of ice began to shoot up out of the water; and it seemed as though the bottom of the sea was covered with ice.

At first there were a great many seals, and they kept pretty much on the surface, perhaps because it was too cold for them to dive.

But soon the ice covered everything, and before long it was so thick that it was impossible to make holes to catch seals by. Besides this, there came heavy falls of snow; the snow fell so thickly that deep ravines were filled up and the hills and plains were all on one level. Every living thing died, and there was no going about, either on land or water.

The people devoured the provisions they had, and for a long time these sufficed. In those days people rarely knew what it was to suffer hunger. When the winter was over, there were often provisions left under the stones, uneaten. And in those days people also gathered great quantities of berries and stone-crop, which were preserved in blubber, and people never used to touch the preserves till well into the winter.

So that the first winter was not so unbearable; but when

the time came at which, in other years, spring and summer used to make their appearance, the warm weather did not come. The snow did not melt, and the ice still covered the sea.

And after this winter-summer, there came a still more severe winter.

Then terror and privation came upon all the East-coast dwellers, for their provisions were at an end, and there was no hope for the winter. It was not long before famine and death by starvation began to harry them.

First, they ate all the things that one generally flies to when stores run short, whatever was in any way eatable; the skins that they wore, the skins of the kayaks, and the skins of the umiaqs. The more cautious among them, who still hoped that spring and summer would come again, contented themselves with cutting off the top parts of the umiaq skins, so that the bottom and a little piece of the side were left. And it is said that when at last there was open water again, the umiaqs put to sea without skins to the sides, and that you could see the legs of the rowers through the sides of the boat.

But most people thought that there would never be any summer again, and that everybody would have to die.

When they had nothing left to eat, and yet were loth to die, they began to eat dead bodies. When a man or woman died, the corpse was cut up and devoured; and the survivors ate those living in the same house with them; parents ate the bodies of their children, and children their parents.

But it came to pass that many were seized with madness when they had eaten those they loved. Yet the few clung so fast to life when it seemed as though death was to be the lot of all, that they preferred eating their dear ones to being eaten themselves.

Human liver was the worst. Those who ate that, went out of their minds; and even if they recovered, they lost their hair.

And, as the winter advanced, the famine became more acute. At last they were no longer content with eating those



who died naturally ; the stronger murdered those who were too weak to defend themselves.

But after the people had suffered like this, and nearly all of them were dead, the cold stopped, and the summer came and those who were left were saved.

It is many years now since it happened that two winters followed one upon another without summer ; but all we who have come after are descended from cannibals, you see.





ZACHARIAS, SUPERINTENDENT AT JAKOBHAVN



## A TEMPTATION

IN the seal-catching camp at Kangigdlinguaq, north-east of Cape Farewell, lived Majuvartariaq ("The Ascending-place"), an old maiden who had received the name of Nikoline in baptism. She was about forty years of age; she squinted and had a cataract forming upon each eye; she was snub-nosed, and her mouth was crooked from over-much practice in tobacco-chewing.

When she opened her mouth she revealed yellow teeth and her indiarubber cheeks contracted into a lump which projected beyond her cheekbones, while the tobacco-stained saliva dribbled down her chin.

She was so ugly that one felt sorry for her beforehand.

One evening, after dark, I went up over the little ridge at the back of our tent to pay the old lady a visit. I took with me a light—I knew that it would be dark in her tent—matches, a roll of chewing-tobacco, and a biscuit. These gifts would, I knew, make her absolutely happy.

It was some time before I found her modest tent: a disused umiaq cover, stretched across a few oars; in the dark it was impossible to distinguish it, and I only discovered it when I was on the point of falling over it.

"Oh! to think of your bringing me all this! No! but see! Gratitude devours me, refuse of men!" stammered Nikoline.

I sat down in her tent. At once she took a fresh piece of tobacco into her mouth and lighted the candle. When we had been sitting talking for a little time on general matters, I asked her to tell me something about the time when she was a heathen on the East coast.

"Just a few harmless legends!" I proposed.

Nikoline's face assumed a horrified expression, and she

waved her hand deprecatingly, as though to defend herself from my impious suggestion.

"No! really, you know! I am baptized now, and ever since I have been a Christian woman I have tried to forget all that belonged to my heathendom—and should I begin to tell legends? No; those I have really managed to forget. It is never any good to me to have anything to do with a thing on which I have once turned my back. I used at that time to be very fond of drum-songs; and one day, after I had been baptized, I yielded to a sudden desire to sing one of my old songs. I did so; and, just fancy! afterwards it was almost impossible for me to get it out of my head again. Even if my mouth was shut, and my voice mute, the tune went round and round in my head and would not leave me.

"One day, a long time after I had been baptized, a umiak came from the East coast on a trading voyage to Qernertoq; it was Christian's boat. At that time he was unbaptized, and a magician.

"They had encamped a little way from the houses, and a great many people had gathered round them. Then suddenly Christian began to sing spirit-songs, and the women who had come with him joined in.

"I heard it and ran away, for I could feel how the old melodies were gaining power over me again.

"But the people came to see me, and said that they were only drum-songs, and there would be no harm in my hearing them; and so I let myself be persuaded, and went to the tent where they were singing.

"I sat down at the tent door and listened, and listened. At last I fancied that I was dreaming, and that I was on the East coast; I thought that I was at home again, that I was still a heathen and had never been baptized.

"And that was just because I had heard the old drum-songs.

"But the evil is so difficult to vanquish when you have once known it.

"Yes. Now one has other ways and new thoughts, which

give life greater joys than I could hope for before, it seems to me. Now I know that I shall see my dead ones again, and the thought fills me with so much comfort that I am very willing to forget all the old.

"Of all who are dead, I miss one sister most; she died, baptized, and was buried at Qernertoq. Oh, I should have had good clothes if she had been alive. Sometimes I go up to her grave, and then I have to swallow my tears.

"What do you say? Tell, tell about the old times when we were still 'unknowing,' when the evil was still within us? Yes, but you want me all the time to talk about what I do not want to remember any more. I have really forgotten everything!

"When I was prepared for baptism, at first I found it impossible to understand what they were explaining to me. And I simply could not learn 'those that one makes speak' (letters).

"'Have you ever had to do with anything evil?' my teacher, who was a German Moravian priest, asked me. 'Perhaps there is something that prevents you understanding the holy things. You must confess. Speak out freely!'

"I thought it over, but there was nothing but the drum-songs, and so I confessed those. I thought that that was the wickedest thing I had ever done. But it was no use my telling about the drum-songs and my pleasure in them, when I was ignorant and did not know the good.

"It seemed that it must be something else that prevented me taking in the teaching about the good thing. And then I remembered suddenly that an old magician, Qangatse, had once tried to teach me magic. I had forgotten all about that, for it had been so long before, simpleton that I was! And so I told all about it and how it had happened, and my teacher was pleased at my confessing the evil.

"After that day I understood easily what was explained to me, and I even managed to learn my letters a little.

"You shall hear my confession!

"It was at Igdlularssuit, on the East coast; Maja and I

were playing in a large empty house. It was in the autumn, while people were still living in their tents. It was dark inside, and we were playing at shadows (*tarqajaq*).

“‘*Tarqajauvutit*’ (‘You are a shadow’), we cried to each other; ‘*atata-ata-ata!*’ And then we ran, terrified, about the empty house, screaming and pushing one another.

“‘You are the shadow! *atata-ata-ata!*’ we screamed, groping about in the dark.

“No one took any notice of us, and we were enjoying our play. We were half-grown girls, and no one missed us.

“‘What are you doing?’ suddenly said some one inside the house, and we recognised his voice; it was the great magician, *Qangatse*.

“‘We are playing shadows,’ we replied.

“‘Foolishness!’ said he. ‘Play! There is nothing really amusing in empty play. No, a little magic, there is something in that; that is the only thing that is really amusing.’

“I shuddered. ‘What on earth could he be going to do with us?’ I thought, and I was afraid, for even at that time I had made up my mind, privately, to go down to the baptized ones.

“‘Come, and I will teach you something,’ he said, and drew us into a corner of the house where it was dark. He sat down and began to rub a stone,—towards the left, of course, the evil direction.

“Immediately we heard a strange murmuring and several voices, all talking at once. Those were his helping-spirits, and we heard, rising up from the floor, from far under the earth, a chorus singing spirit-songs. It sounded beautiful, yes, like psalm-singing in the church down here.

“I shook with fear. His helping-spirits announced themselves, humming and murmuring, from the roof, from the walls of the house, and from the floor below. Yes; it was all incomprehensible.

“‘Ah, now, *Amarsiniôq*, come,’ he said at last, and we heard a great noise inside the house. Neither of us dared to utter a word; I was trembling with fear, and I had a

feeling as if my skin were being drawn slowly off, over my head.

“‘Is not my Amarsiniôq here in the house?’ said Qangatse. We could not get a word out for terror, neither dared we try to run away through the long dark house.

“‘Amarsiniôq’ is a great monster with an open back, dressed in seal-skins,—yes, he has a hole in his back! And when he sees children out alone he steals them and puts them in his hollow back.

“We heard the monster prowling about inside the house, but could not see him, for it was dark. Then Qangatse suddenly stopped rubbing on the stone, and there was silence in the house again.

“‘See, it is worth while learning an art of that kind; that is very different from fooling about and playing! I am an orphan like you, and have never had a proper home among men. People did not trouble themselves about me, and so I went long walks by myself, that I might become a magician.

“‘There are many strange creatures who live up among the rocks and down in the sea, under the beach; they became my helping-spirits. Up in the hills among them, I am more at home than among men and women. Come up in the hills and I will teach you many things!’ he said to me.

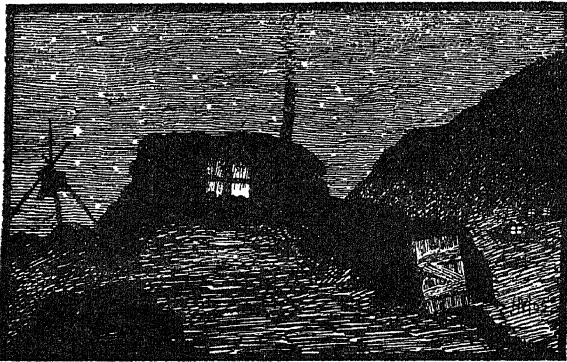
“‘We will go up to a dry lake and I will rub my stone to the left and then the water will suddenly gush out of the earth and fill the pool. At first the fresh water will lie calm, without any movement; after that it will curl up, as dark shadows flit across it; then it will rise up in great waves, and a monster, like a dog to look at, will appear in the centre. It will take me and eat me, press me, and grind me up, limb for limb. Then it will do the same with you. But it will throw us up again, just as we were before it ate us, and then we shall have become greater magicians than we were before. This monster has often eaten me like that, that I might grow greater in my magic power. It comes out of a heap of stones in the middle of the lake; it is horrible to look at, but you must not be afraid.’



“Then I saw that he wanted to have me for an assistant and that he wanted to teach me his art.

“‘You are an orphan like me, and I thought that I could help you,’ he said kindly.

“But I was so afraid of him, that I ran away and hid myself.”































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